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PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN™



Stan Lee PRESENTS:

THE DAGGER AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!

STORY &
LAYOUTS
AL MILGROM

INKS
JIM
MOONEY

LETTERING
DIANA
ALBERS

COLORING
BOB
SHAREN

EDITING
DANNY
FINGEROTH

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
JIM
SHOOTER

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:
THE BIONIC BODY OF THE
CRIME-LORD, **SILVERMANE**,
HAS BEEN BROUGHT BACK
FROM THE BRINK OF DEATH.

REVIVED BY THE KINGPIN,
WHO HAD HOPES THAT HE
COULD MANIPULATE THAT
MINDLESS CREATURE
TO ACT AS HIS ASSASSIN,
SILVERMANE SHOWED
DISTURBING TENDENCIES
TO RESIST THE KINGPIN'S
DIRECTIONS.

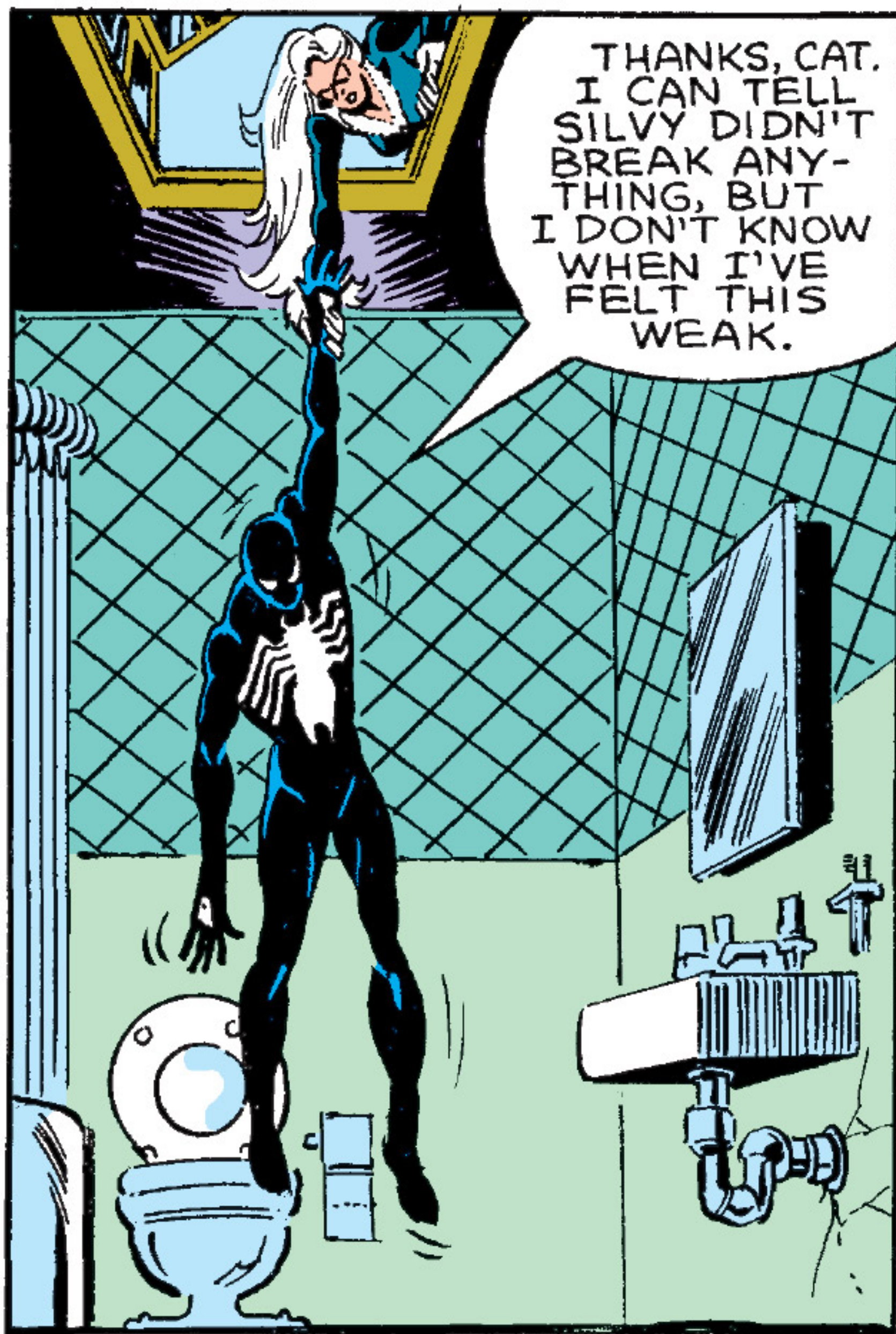
CONSEQUENTLY, WHEN **SILVER-
MANE** GOT INVOLVED IN A
BATTLE WITH THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN, DESPITE
BEING ORDERED TO SHOW
RESTRAINT IN DEALING WITH
THE WEB-SLINGER, HE BEAT
SPIDEY HALF TO DEATH.

AND THAT BRINGS
US UP TO DATE!

OOH! I ACHIEVE ALL OVER.
I STILL DON'T KNOW *WHY*
SILVERMANE LET ME GO
BEFORE HE FINISHED ME--!

DON'T STRAIN
YOURSELF,
SPIDER. THE
BLACK CAT
WILL SEE THAT
YOU'RE ALL
RIGHT! EASY
DOES IT, NOW!



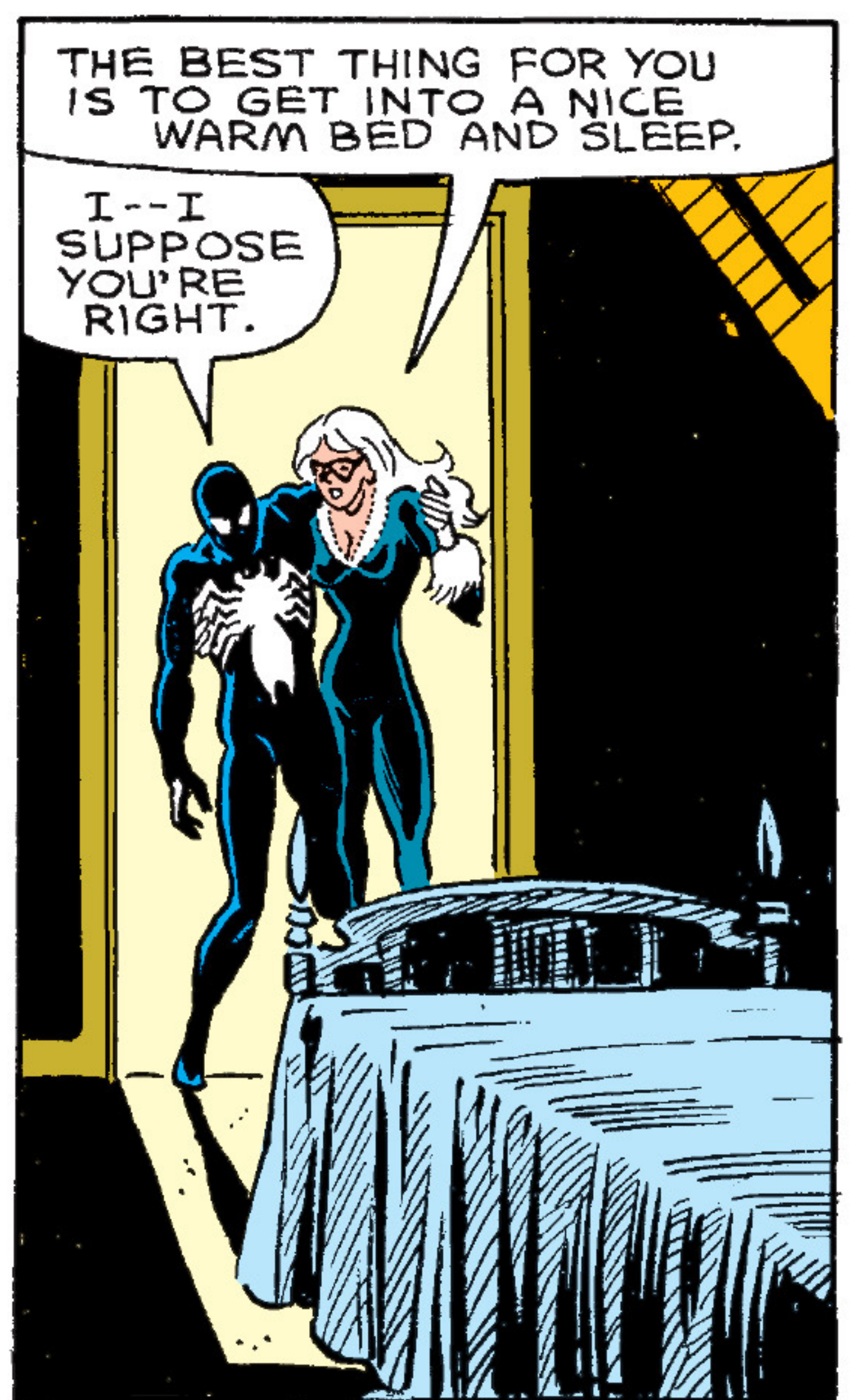


THANKS, CAT. I CAN TELL SILVY DIDN'T BREAK ANYTHING, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHEN I'VE FELT THIS WEAK.



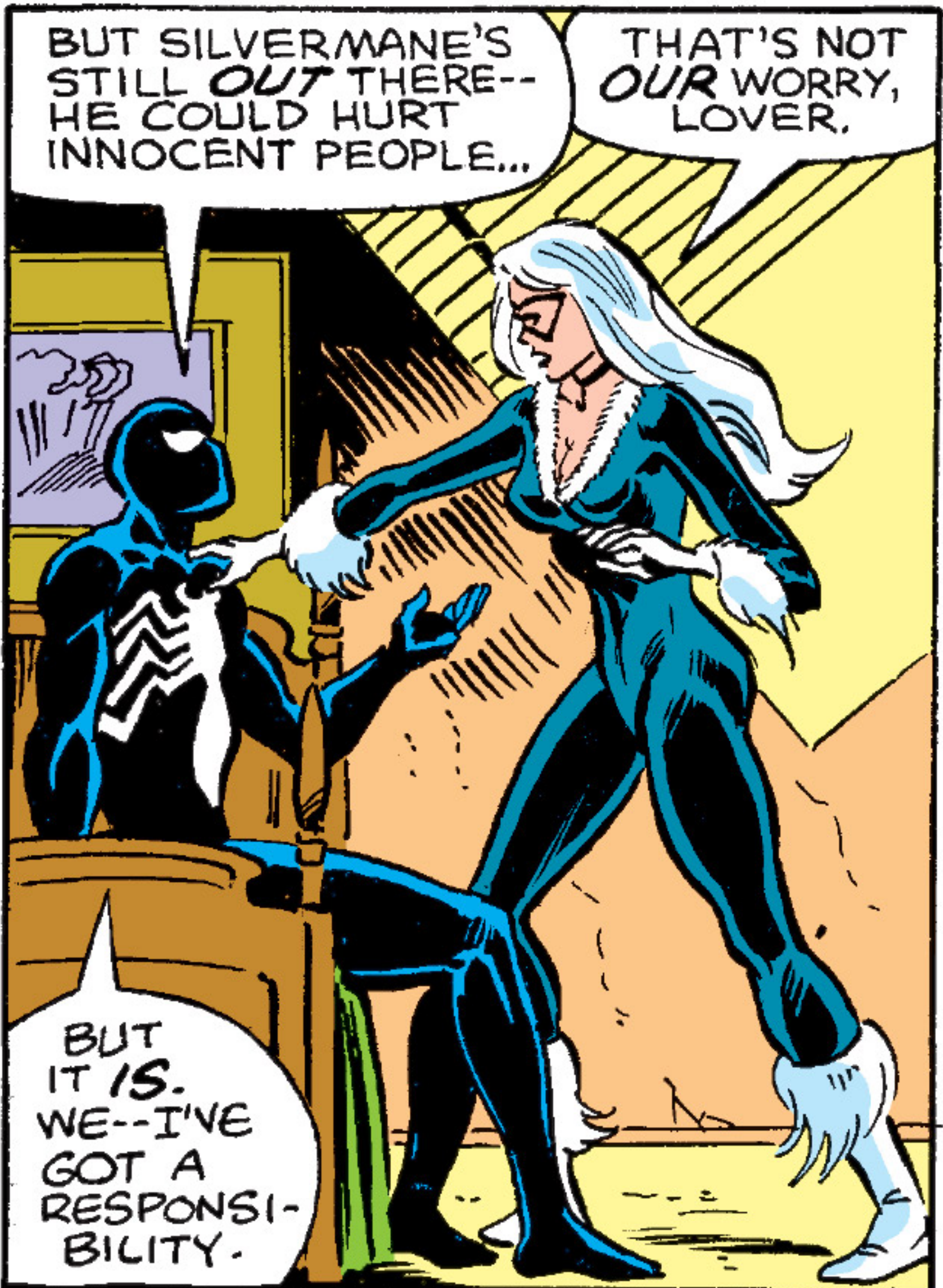
I'VE BEEN FEELING A LITTLE WORN-OUT LATELY ANYWAY, AND THIS BEATING DIDN'T HELP MATTERS.

SHHH! DON'T TALK.



THE BEST THING FOR YOU IS TO GET INTO A NICE WARM BED AND SLEEP.

I--I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT.



BUT SILVERMANE'S STILL *OUT* THERE-- HE COULD HURT INNOCENT PEOPLE...

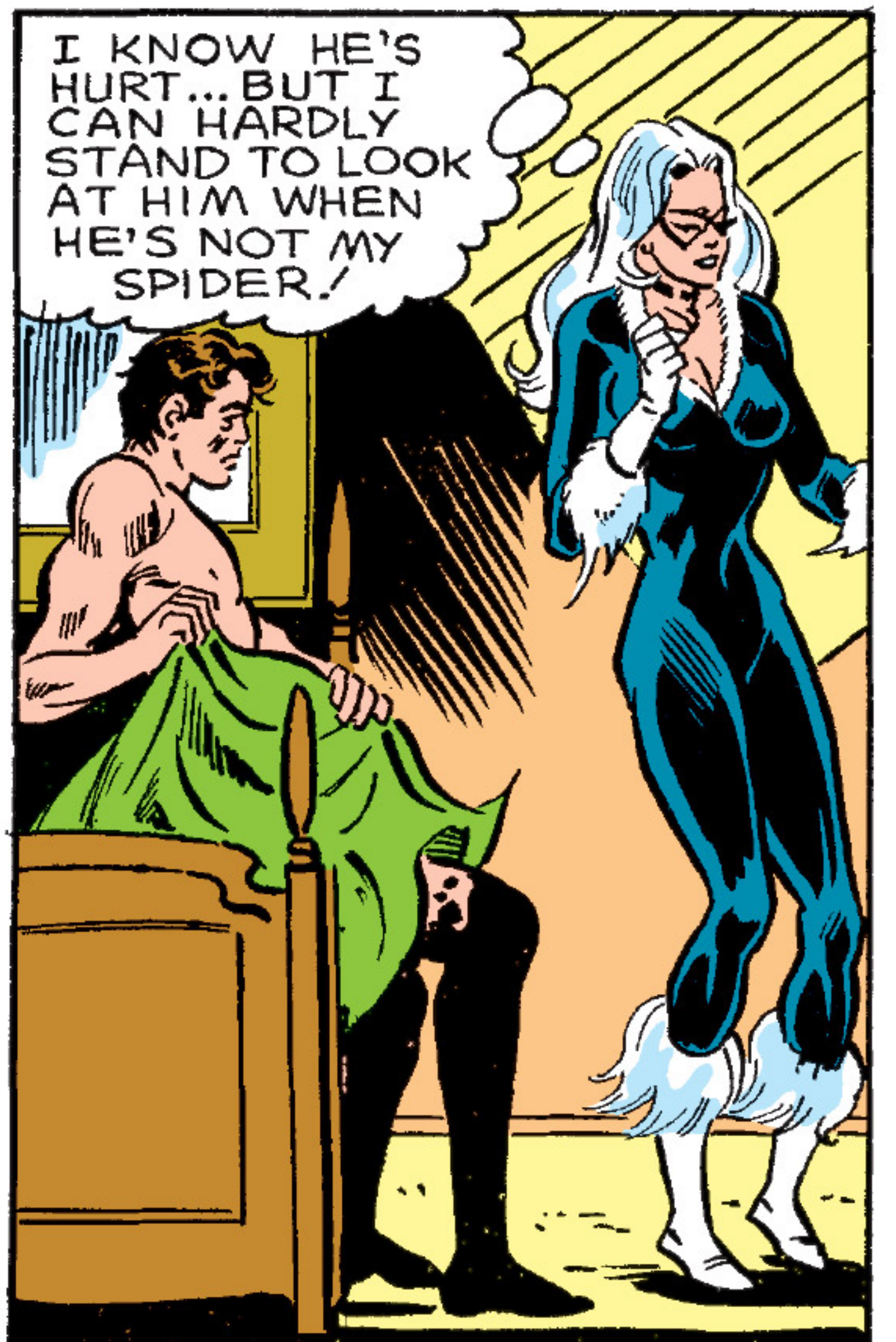
THAT'S NOT OUR WORRY, LOVER.

BUT IT *IS*. WE--I'VE GOT A RESPONSIBILITY.



BUT I'M SO TIRED --I CAN'T DO ANYTHING JUST NOW. GOT TO REST A LITTLE FIRST.

AND IN RESPONSE TO HIS MENTAL COMMAND, PETER PARKER'S COSTUME FLOWS DOWN, REVEALING HIS BATTERED FEATURES...



I KNOW HE'S HURT... BUT I CAN HARDLY STAND TO LOOK AT HIM WHEN HE'S NOT MY SPIDER!



DON'T WORRY...LOVER. IF YOU'RE SO WORRIED ABOUT IT... I'LL FIND SILVERMANE!

NO! CAT! HE'S TOO DANGEROUS. AND FROM WHAT THAT GANGSTER SAID *--

* A LOAN SHARK SILVERMANE WAS PURSUING WHEN SPIDEY GOT INVOLVED. IT HAPPENED LAST ISH--DANNY.



--SOMEHOW THIS ALL TIES IN WITH THE *KINGPIN*.

IT'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO HANDLE ALONE. PROMISE YOU WON'T TRY ANYTHING TILL I CAN GO WITH YOU.

PROMISE ME!



I--I PROMISE.

GOOD! I'LL GET UP IN A FEW MINUTES, JUST A FEW MIN...

HMMF! HE ACTS AS IF I'M HELPLESS WITHOUT HIM. BUT I'LL KEEP MY PROMISE, IF ONLY BECAUSE GETTING INVOLVED MIGHT REVEAL MY CONNECTION TO THE KINGPIN.

I'D HATE FOR MY LOVER TO FIND OUT THAT ONE OF HIS GREATEST ENEMIES IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING ME MY CAT-LIKE POWERS.

MEANWHILE, NOT FAR FROM WHERE THE BLACK CAT SWINGS, SILVERMANE CONTINUES ON HIS BLIND PATH OF DESTRUCTION, SEARCHING, SEEKING... WHAT?

KA-RASH!

LOOK OUT! THAT THING'S GOING BERSERK. GET OUT OF THE WAY!

AND IN THE SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS OF THE KINGPIN...

SO, ANSWER, THE REMOTE TELEVISION UNIT YOU PLACED ON THE SCENE IS STILL BROADCASTING SILVERMANE'S PROGRESS?

YES, BUT IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE HE IS OUT OF THE RANGE OF THE CAMERA.

ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO TRY TO STOP HIM?

NOT AT THIS TIME.

I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHERE WE WENT *WRONG*! THE SUBMISSION COLLAR WE PLACED AROUND HIS NECK SHOULD CAUSE HIM SUFFICIENT PAIN--EVEN IN HIS PRESENT LIMITED MENTAL CAPACITY--TO RESPOND TO OUR ORDERS.

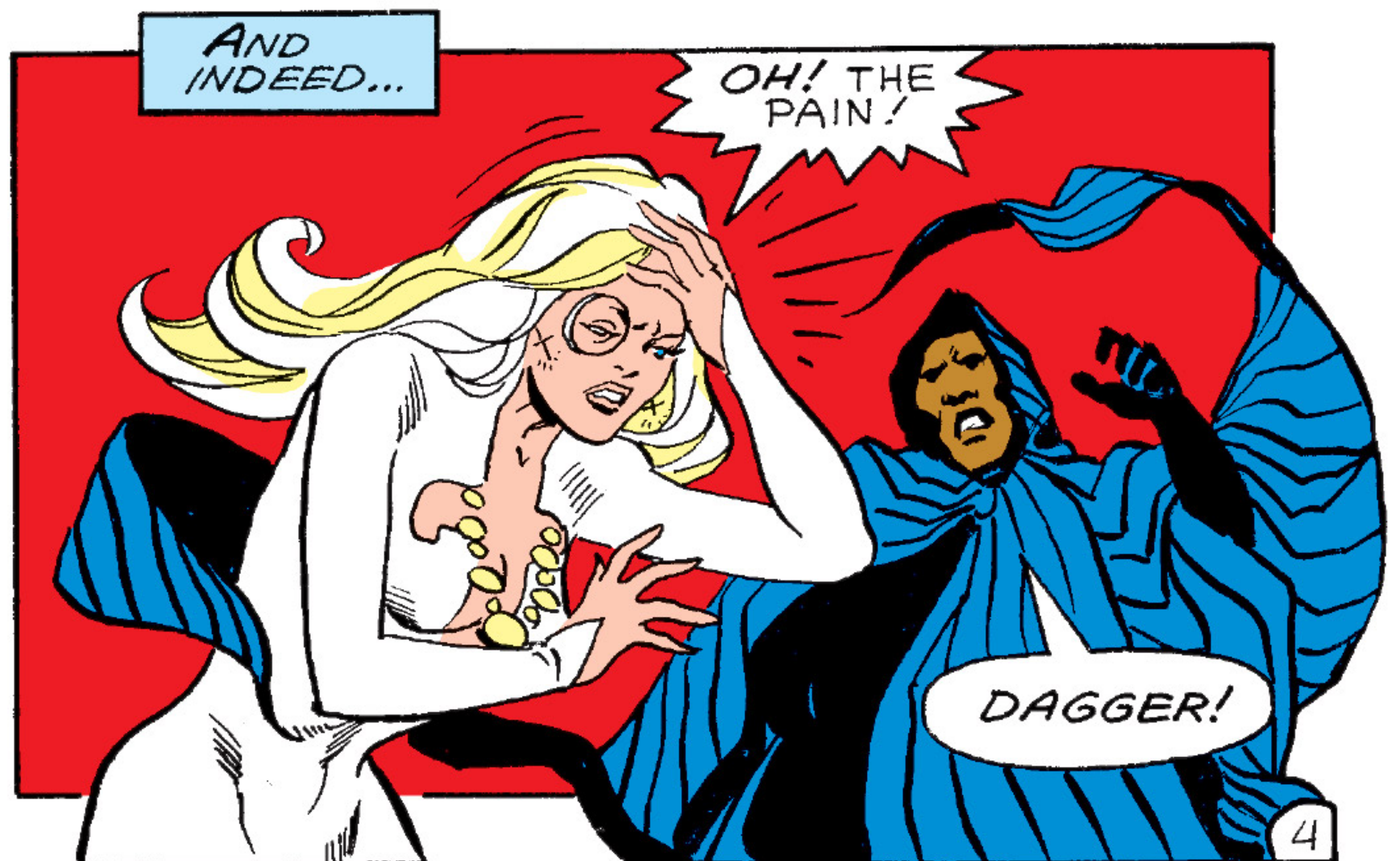
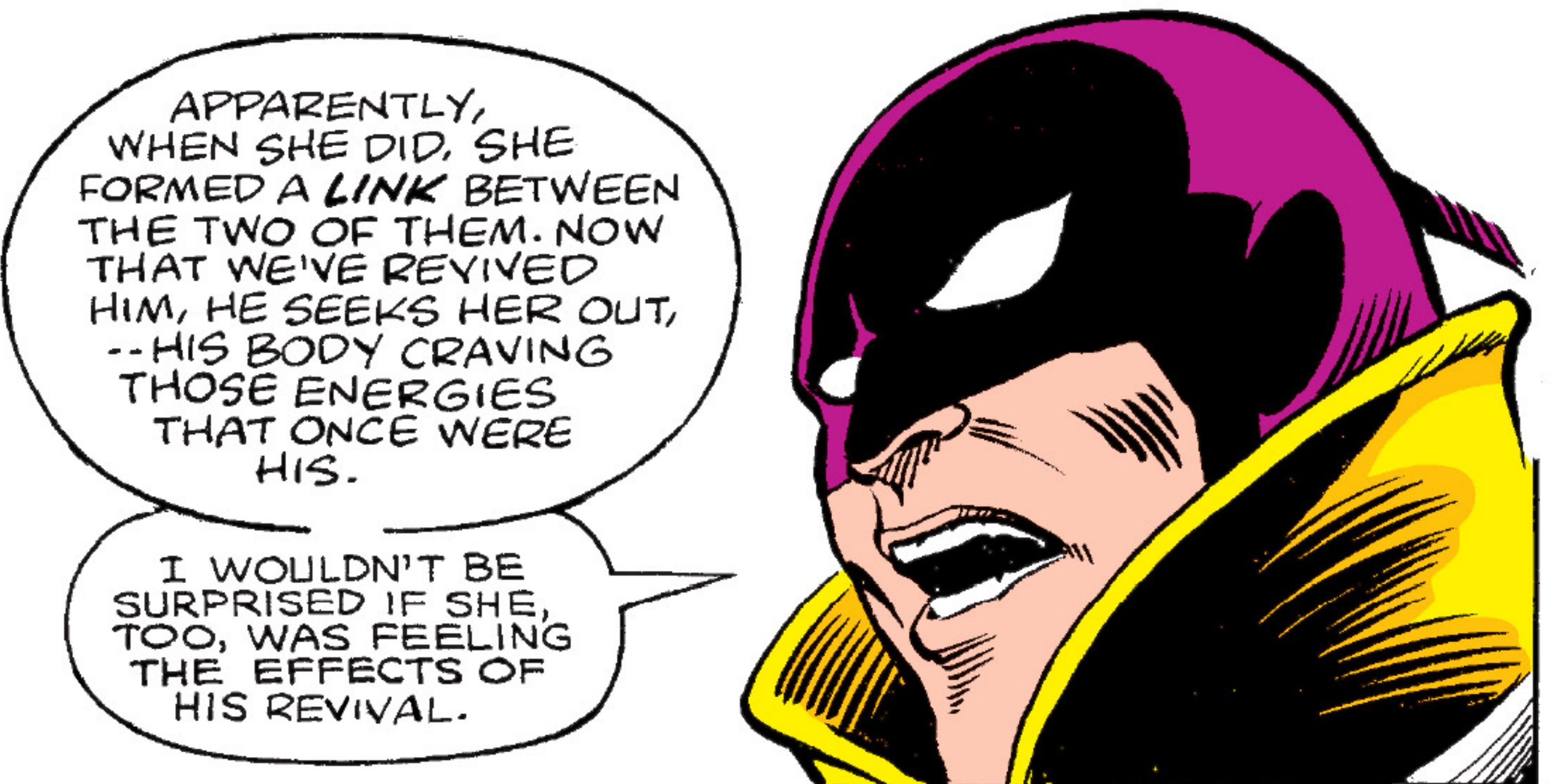
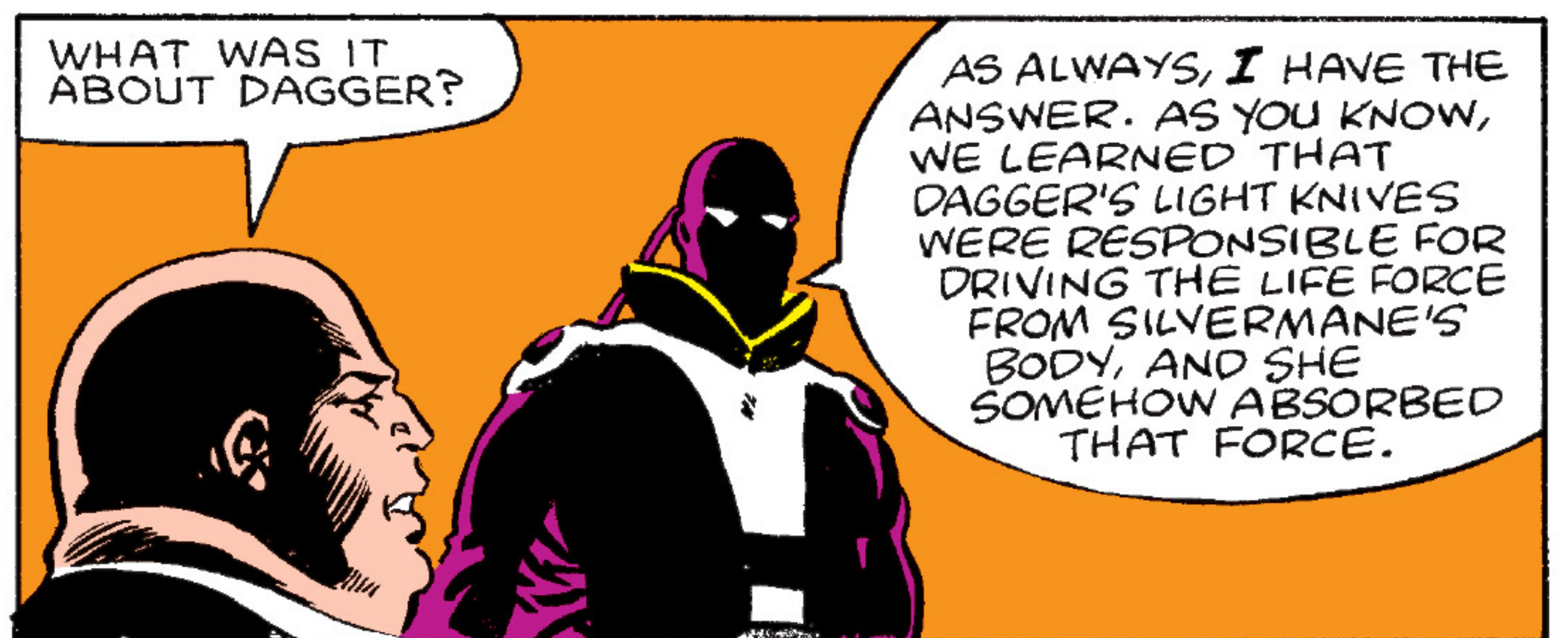
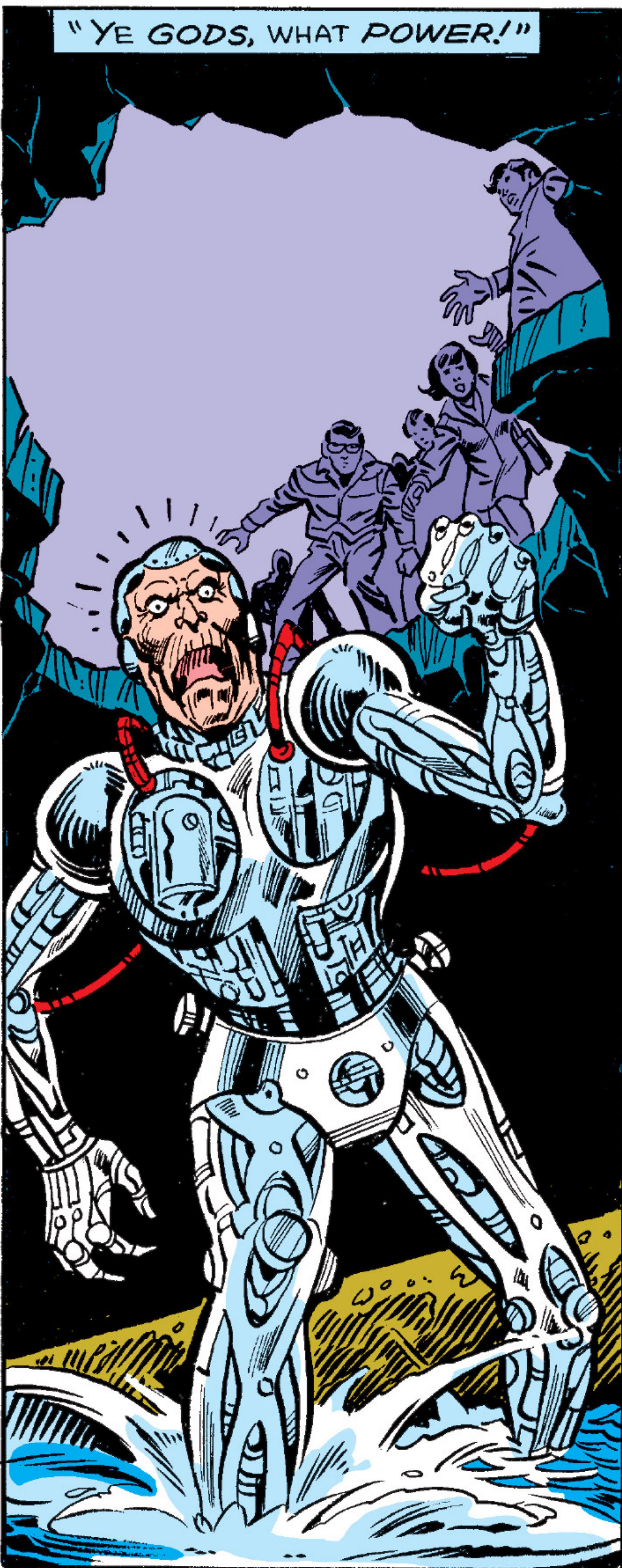
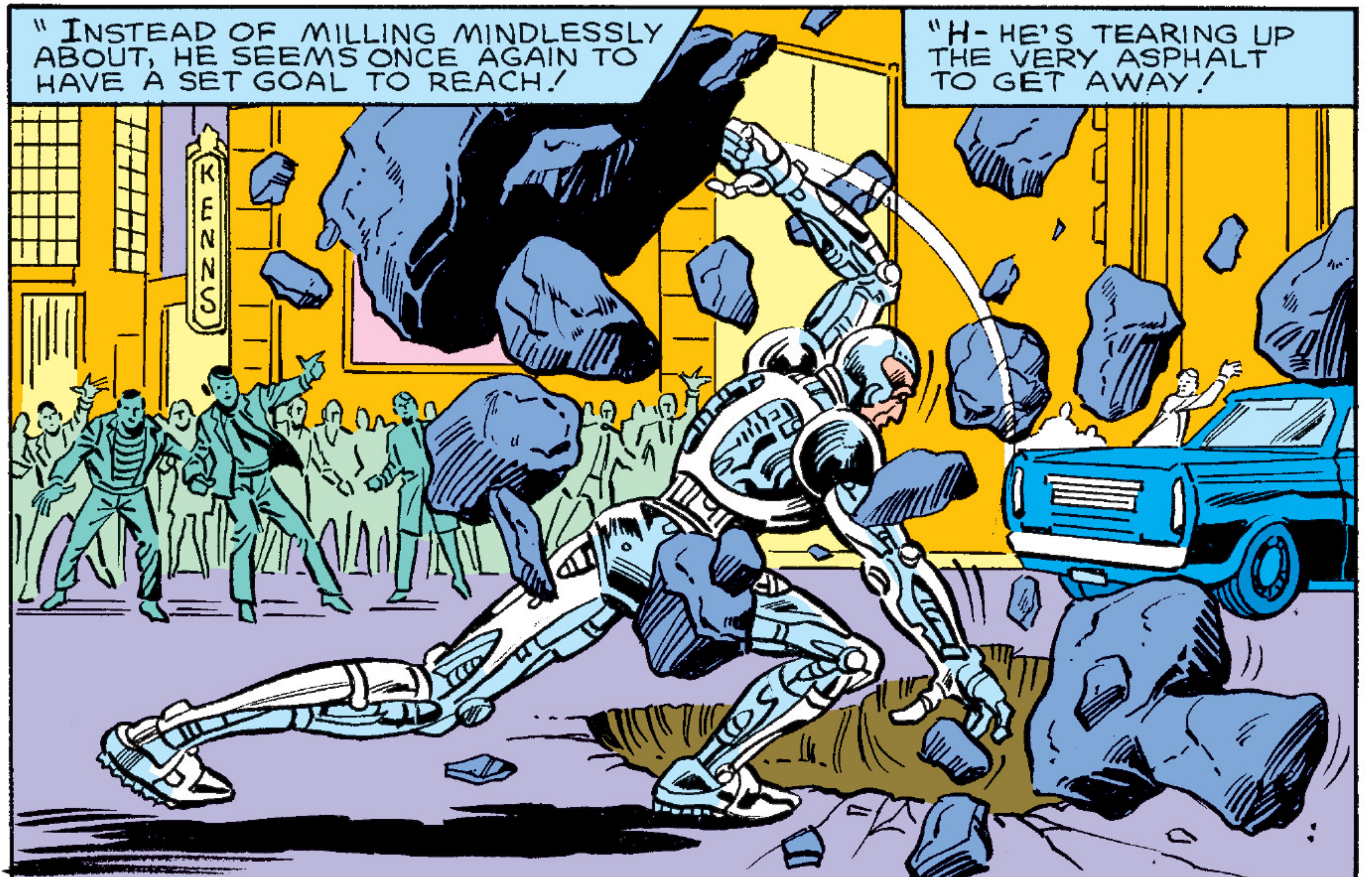
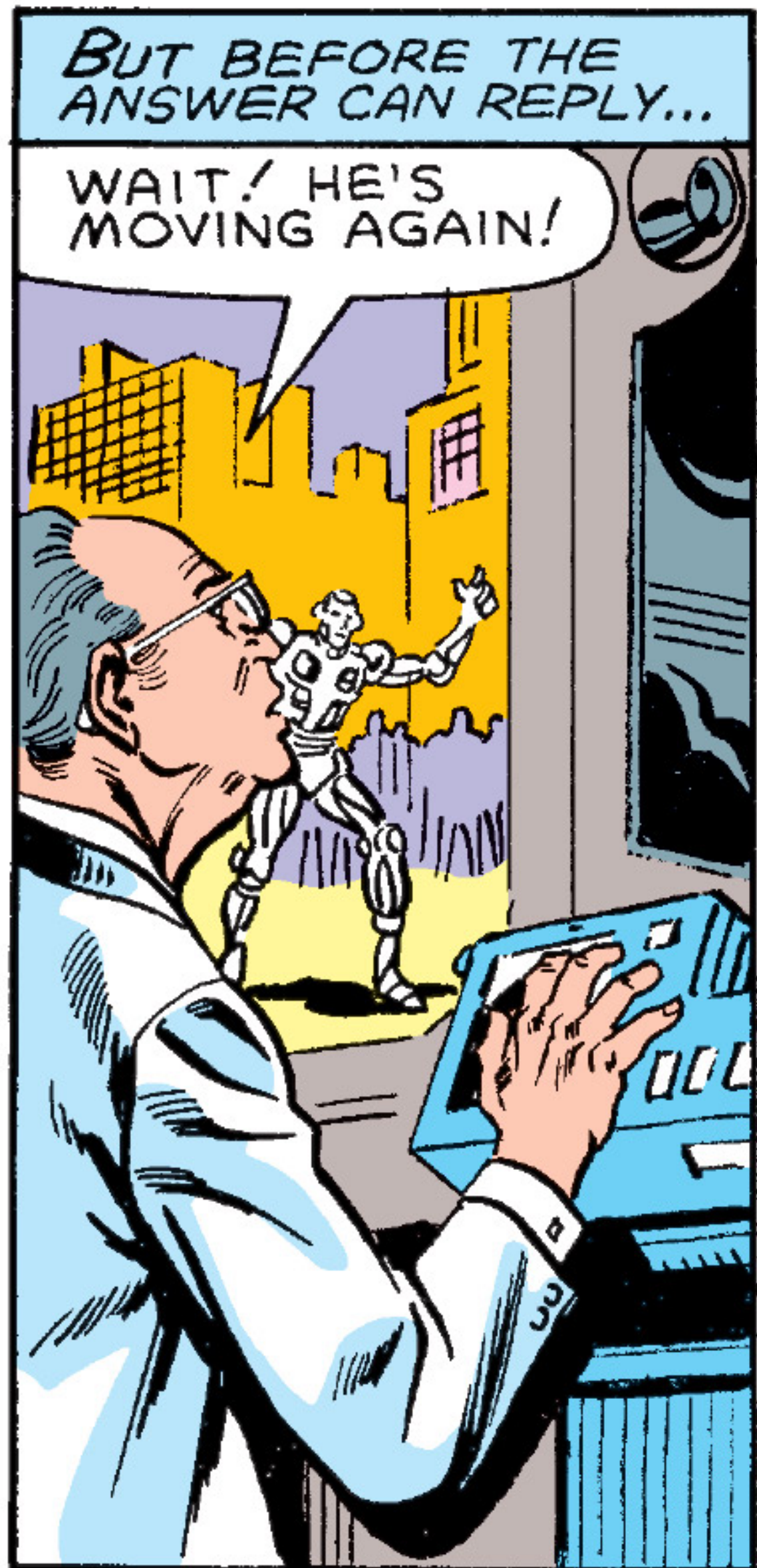
HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE MALFUNCTION?

THERE IS NO MALFUNCTION, PER SE. IT'S AS IF, SOMEHOW, THERE'S AN OUTSIDE FORCE THAT CALLS HIM.

A FORCE GREAT ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM IGNORE THE PAIN.

DAGGER!

WHAT HAS *SHE* GOT TO DO WITH THIS, ANSWER?



CLOAK, IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN. THE MOMENT WE STEPPED OUT OF YOUR CAPE, BACK INTO THE TANGIBLE WORLD, I FELT HURT -- WEAK!

IT HAPPENED BRIEFLY WHEN WE CAUGHT THOSE DRUG DEALERS,* BUT I WAS HOPING THAT IT WAS A ONE-TIME THING.

*LAST ISSUE -- DANNY.

BUT NOW IT'S BACK, WORSE THAN EVER. A GNAWING PAIN FROM WHICH EVEN THIS CHURCH, WE'VE MADE OUR HAVEN, CAN'T GRANT ME SANCTUARY.

AND WHAT'S WORSE, IT LEAVES ME SO DRAINED OF MY LIGHT, THAT I HAVE LITTLE OR NONE TO GIVE YOU.

HUSH! THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT.

NOT NOW, PERHAPS, BUT YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO HOW YOU DEPEND ON ME.

WITHOUT MY EXCESS LIGHT TO SUSTAIN YOU, YOUR HUNGER WILL GROW. THE DARKNESS WITHIN YOU MUST BE FED.

IF IT ISN'T, IT WILL MAKE YOU TAKE THE LIGHT -- THE LIFE -- FROM OTHERS.

OR IF YOU RESIST THE HUNGER, THE DARKNESS WILL DEVOUR YOU!

WHAT CAN WE DO CLOAK?

I -- I WISH I KNEW.

MEANWHILE, IN PETER PARKER'S BEDROOM, A DARK FORM STIRS WITHIN THE SHADOWS...

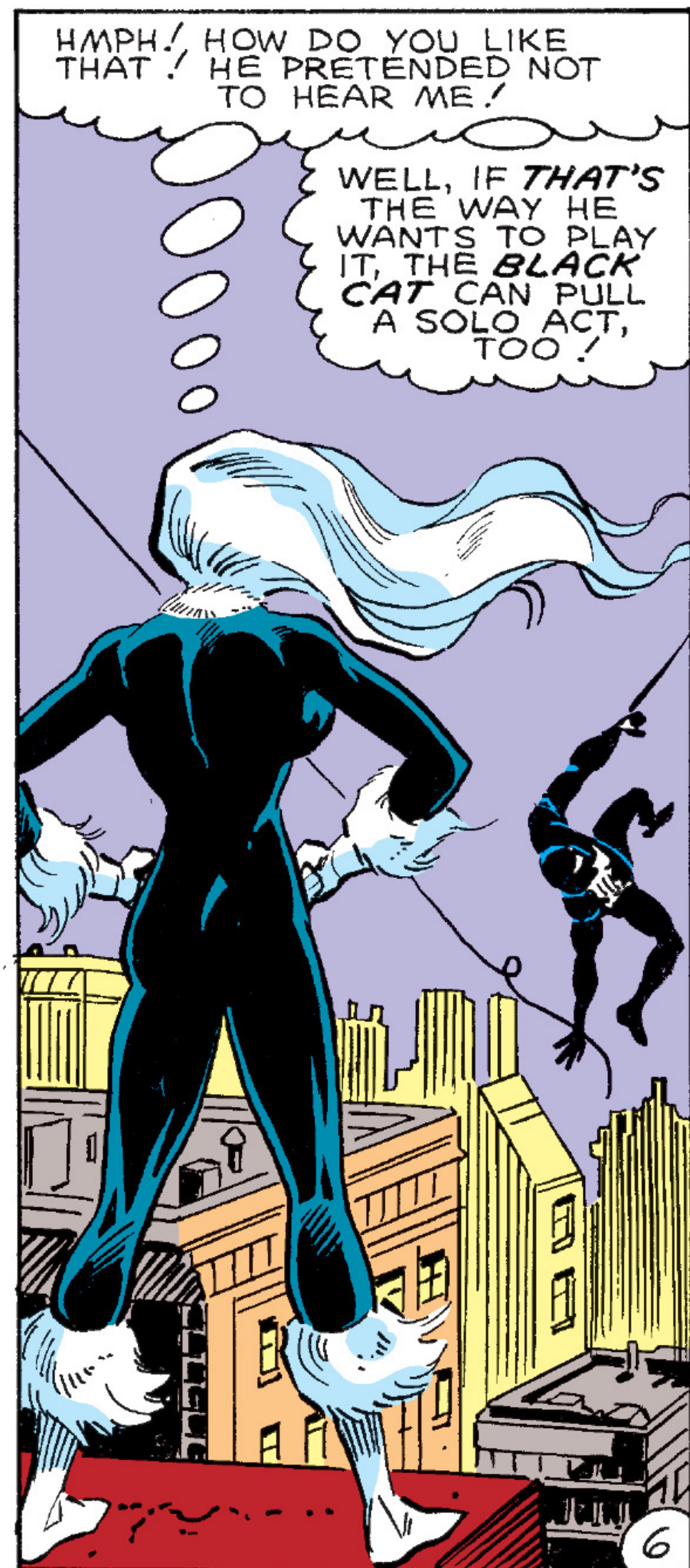
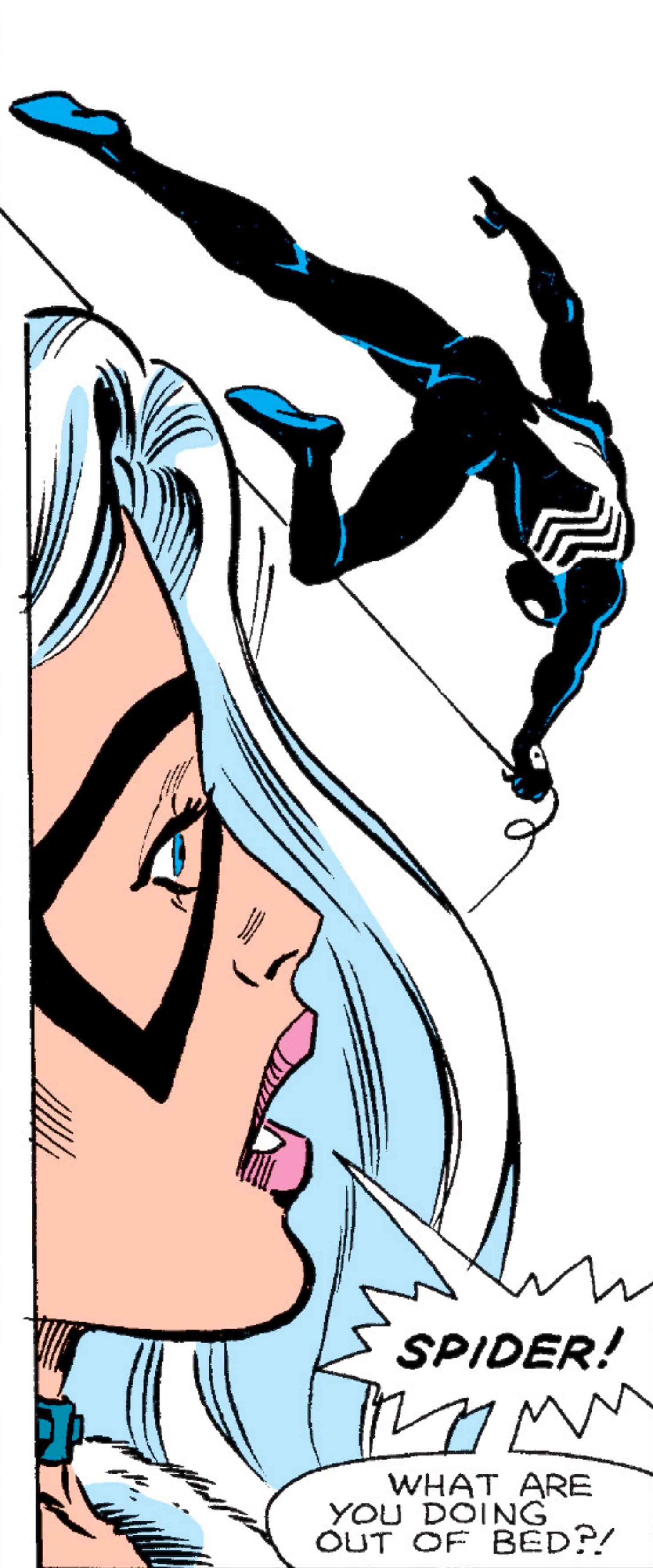
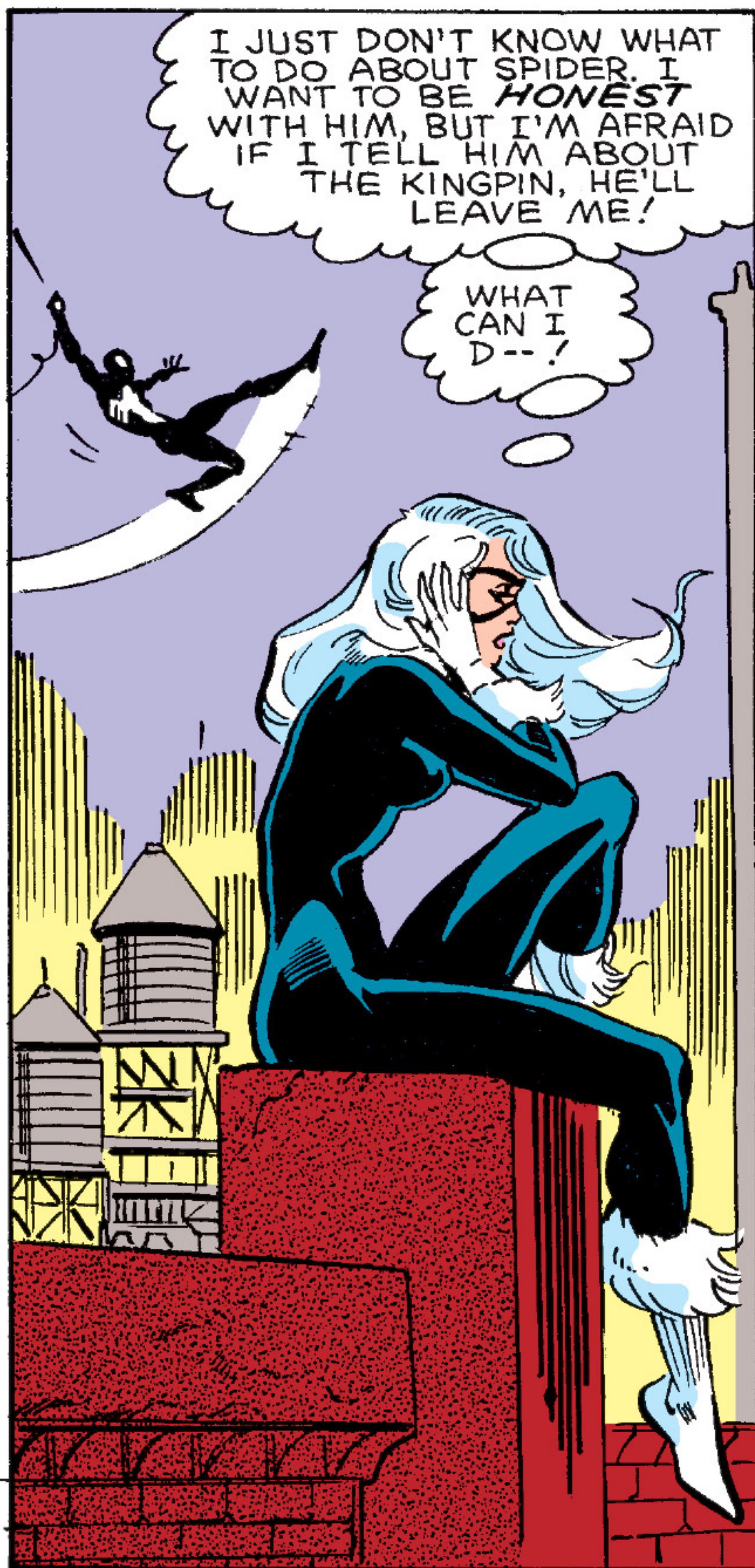
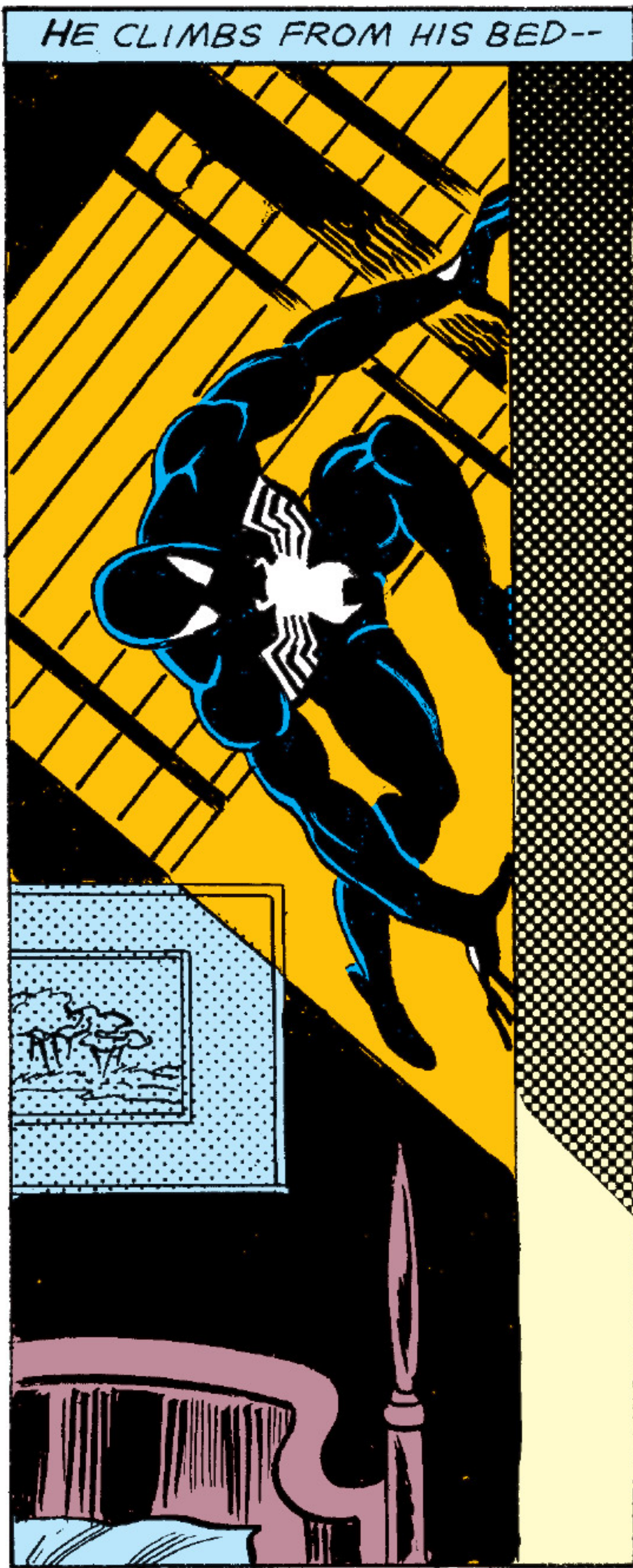
HIS SPIDER COSTUME OOZES OFF THE CHAIR ON WHICH IT HAD RESTED...

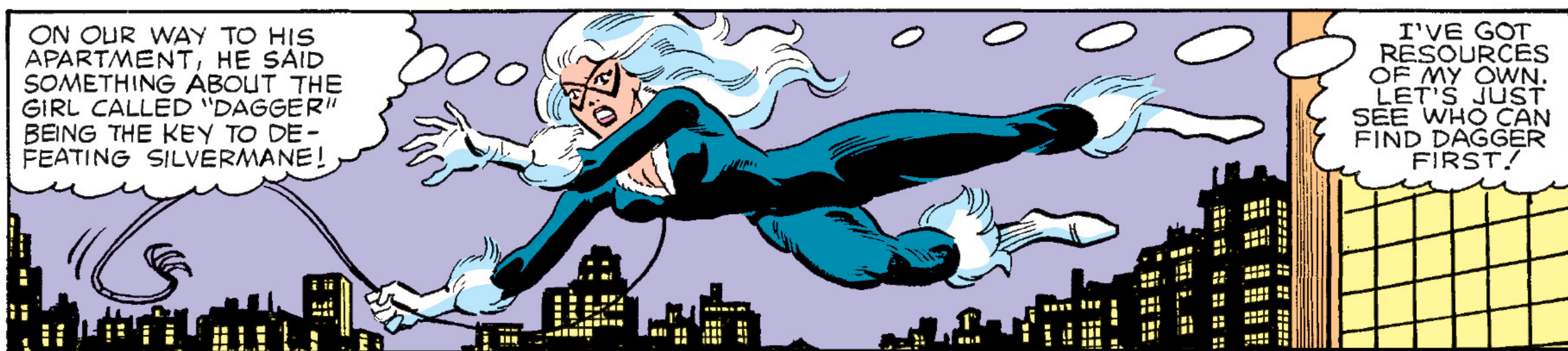
IT GLIDES SILENTLY ACROSS THE FLOOR...

THEN, IN RESPONSE TO SOME SECRET HUNGER OF ITS OWN --

--IT STRIKES!

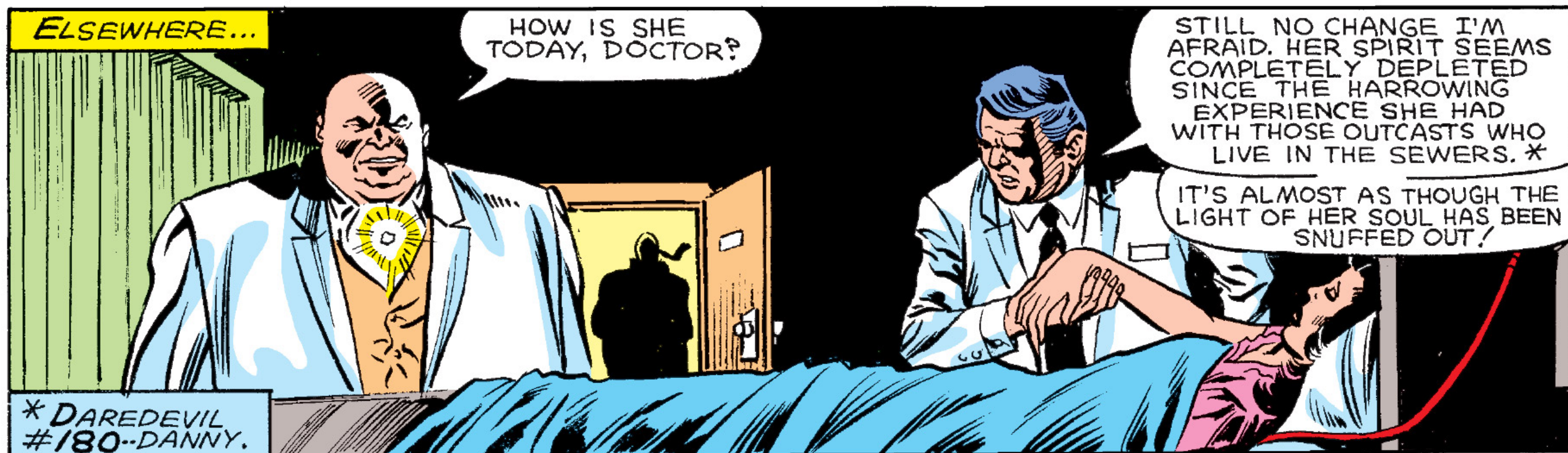
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ON OUR WAY TO HIS APARTMENT, HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THE GIRL CALLED "DAGGER" BEING THE KEY TO DEFEATING SILVERMANE!

I'VE GOT RESOURCES OF MY OWN. LET'S JUST SEE WHO CAN FIND DAGGER FIRST!



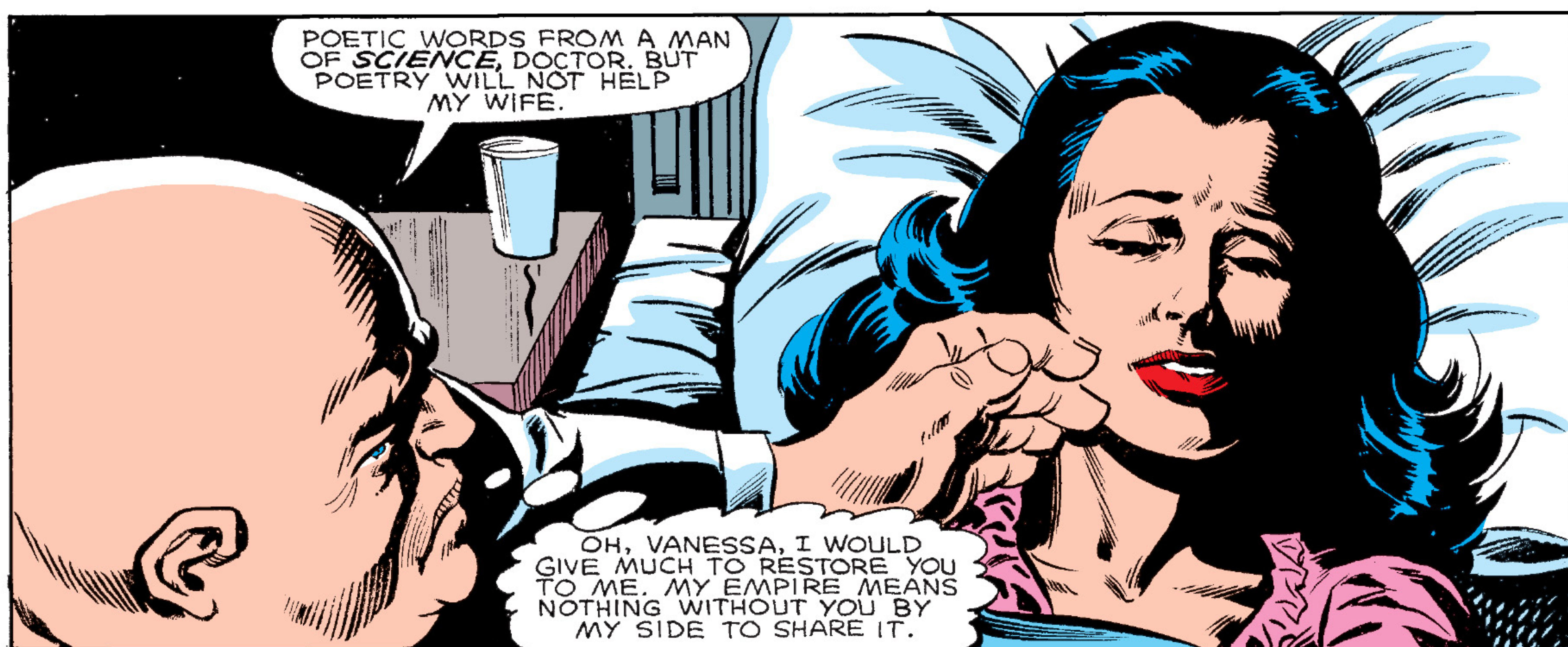
ELSEWHERE...

HOW IS SHE TODAY, DOCTOR?

STILL NO CHANGE I'M AFRAID. HER SPIRIT SEEMS COMPLETELY DEPLETED SINCE THE HARROWING EXPERIENCE SHE HAD WITH THOSE OUTCASTS WHO LIVE IN THE SEWERS. *

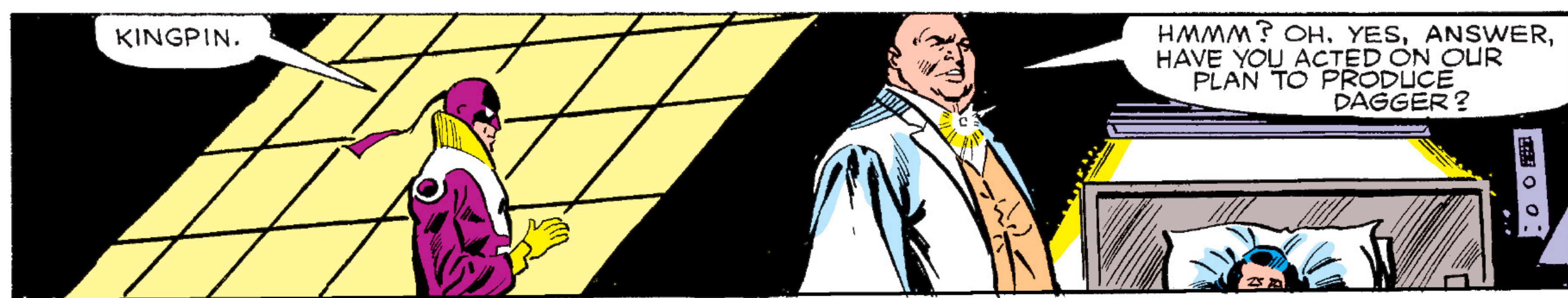
IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH THE LIGHT OF HER SOUL HAS BEEN SNUFFED OUT!

* DAREDEVIL #180-DANNY.



POETIC WORDS FROM A MAN OF SCIENCE, DOCTOR. BUT POETRY WILL NOT HELP MY WIFE.

OH, VANESSA, I WOULD GIVE MUCH TO RESTORE YOU TO ME. MY EMPIRE MEANS NOTHING WITHOUT YOU BY MY SIDE TO SHARE IT.



KINGPIN.

HMMM? OH, YES, ANSWER, HAVE YOU ACTED ON OUR PLAN TO PRODUCE DAGGER?

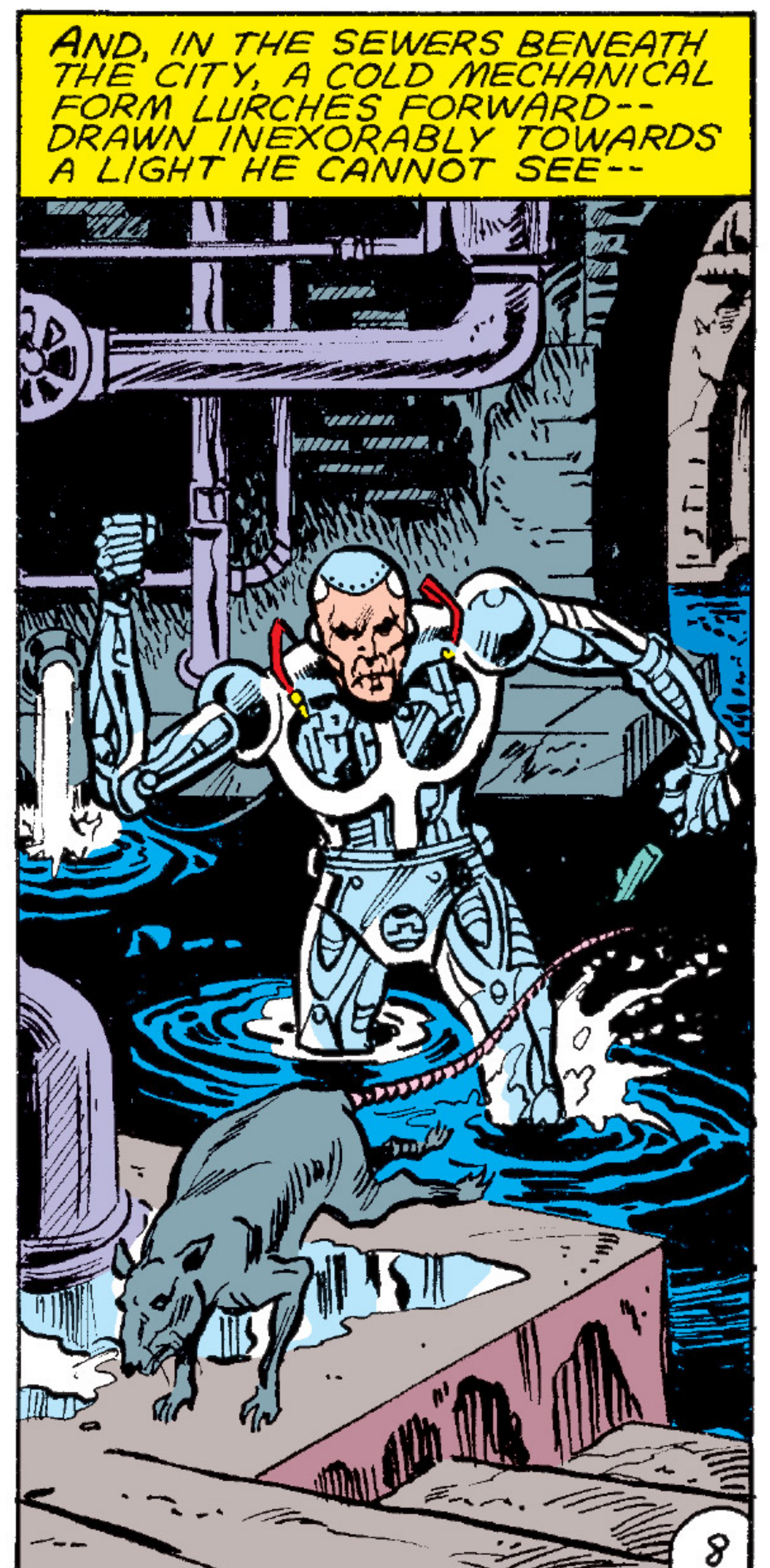
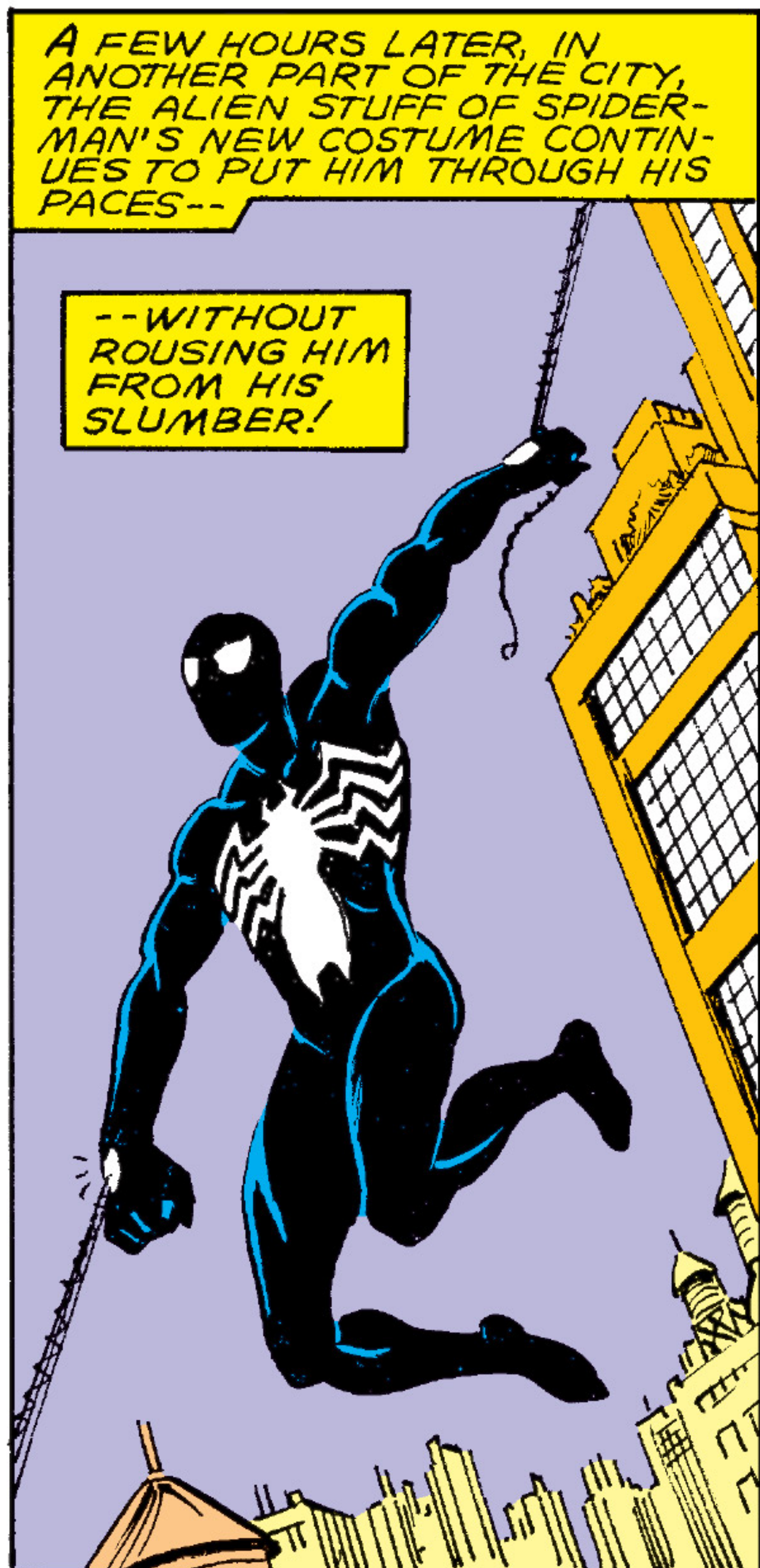
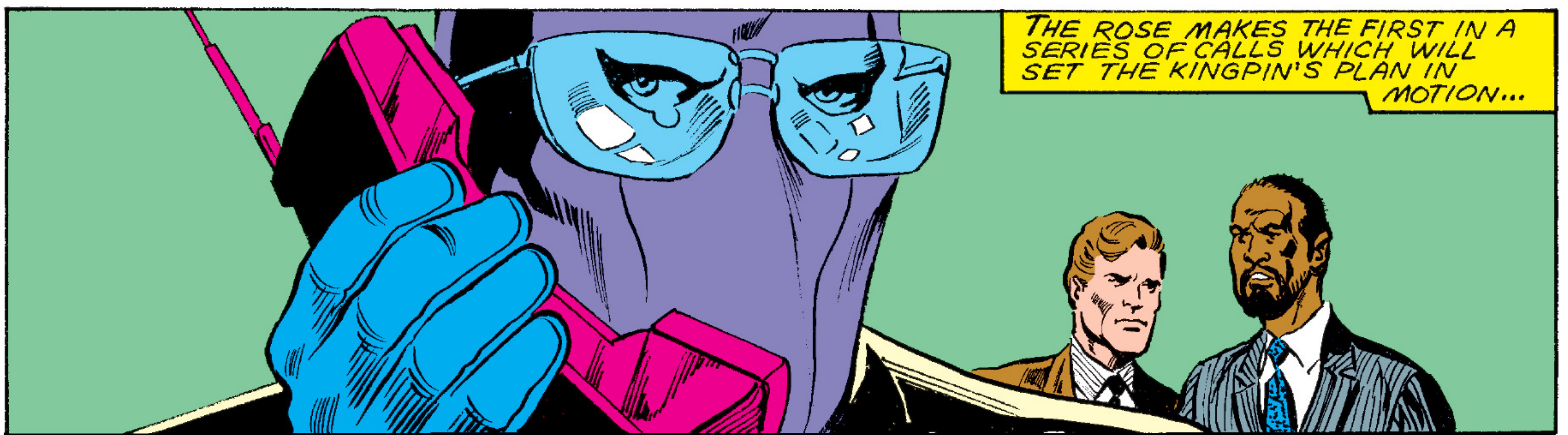
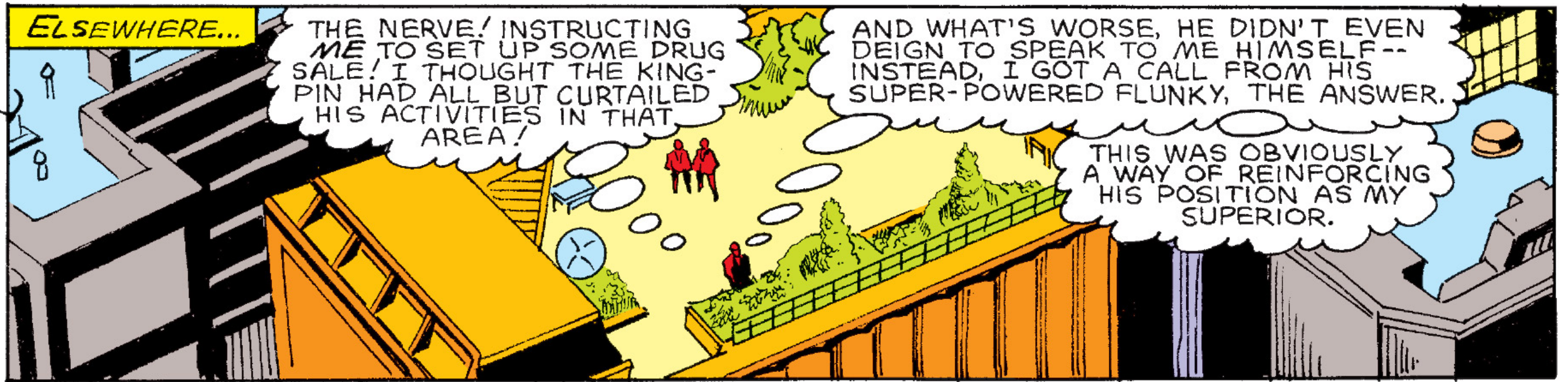


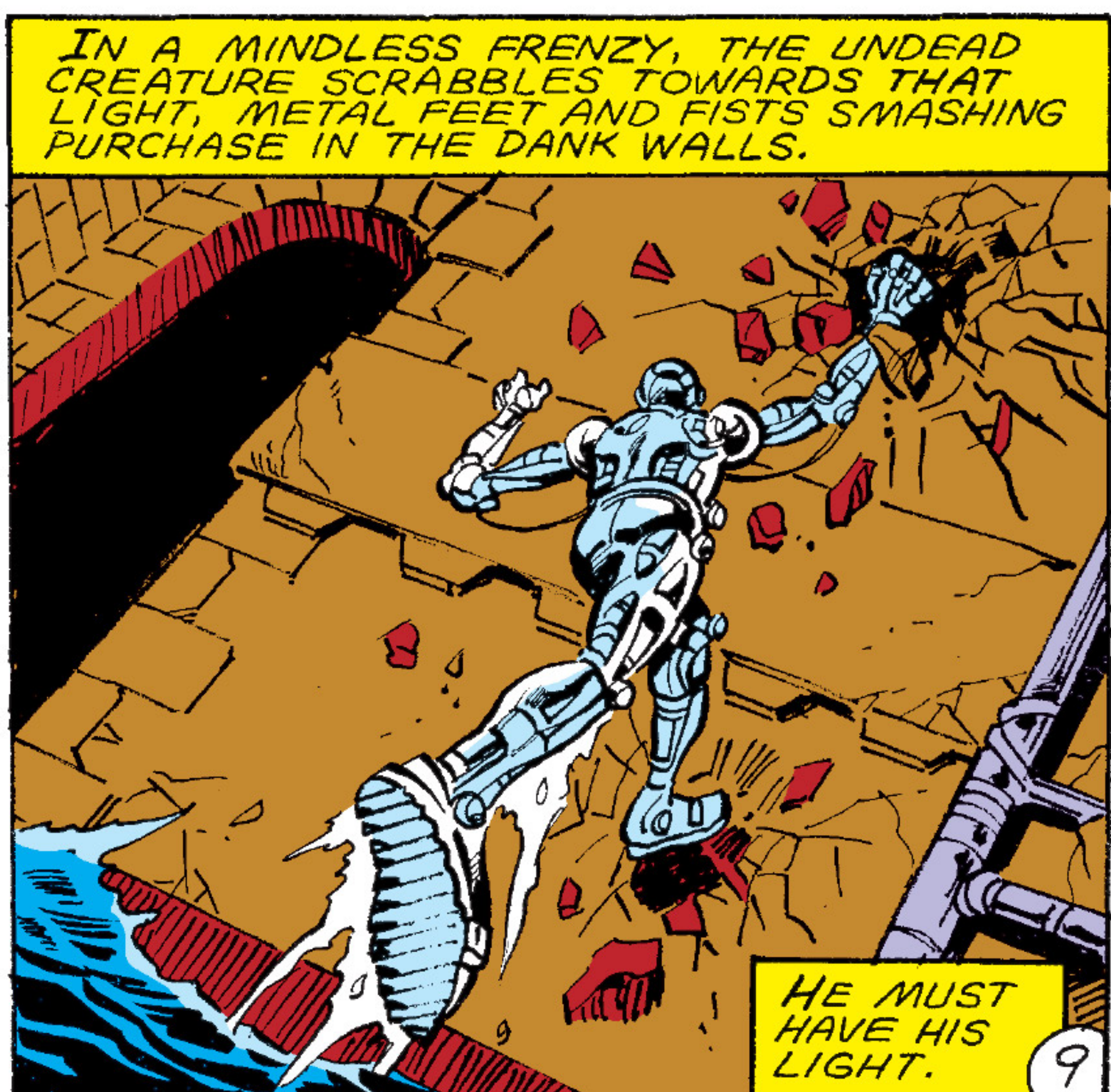
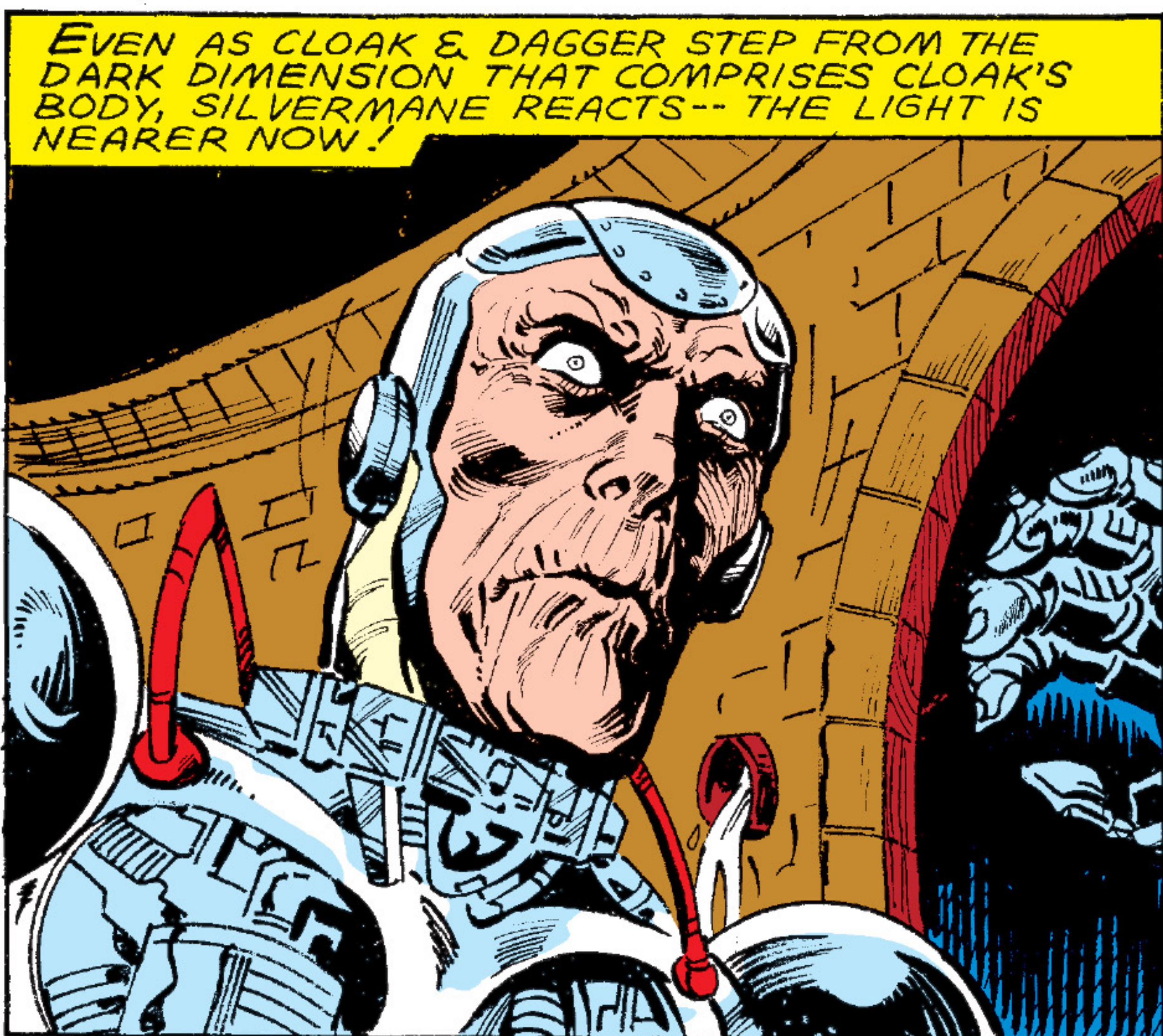
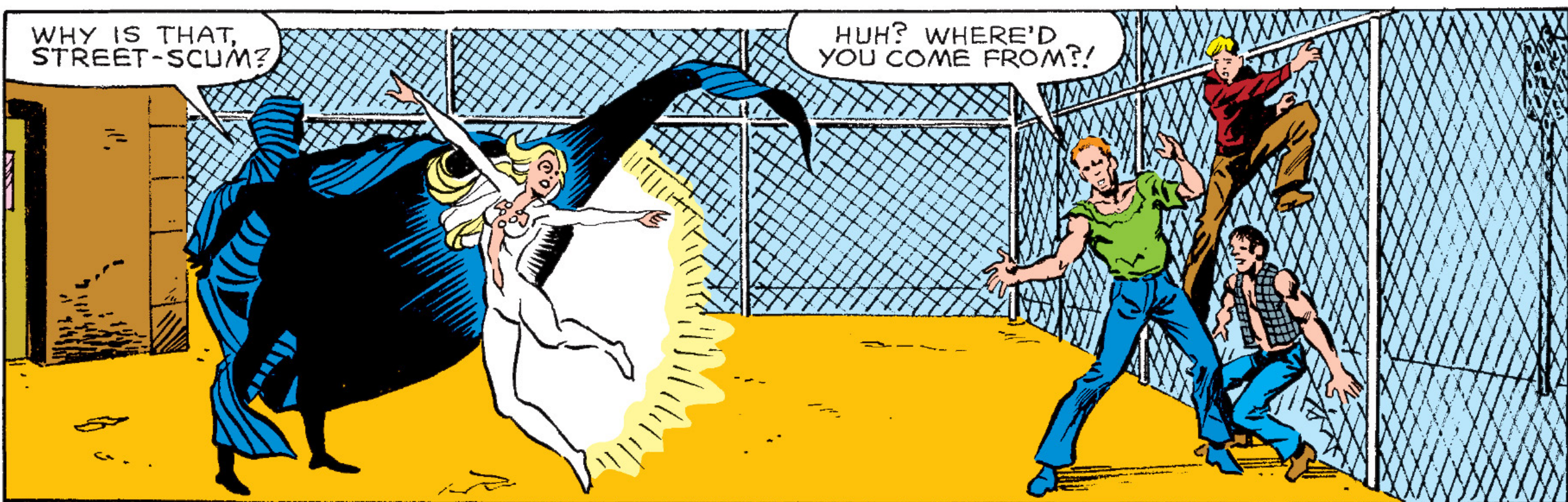
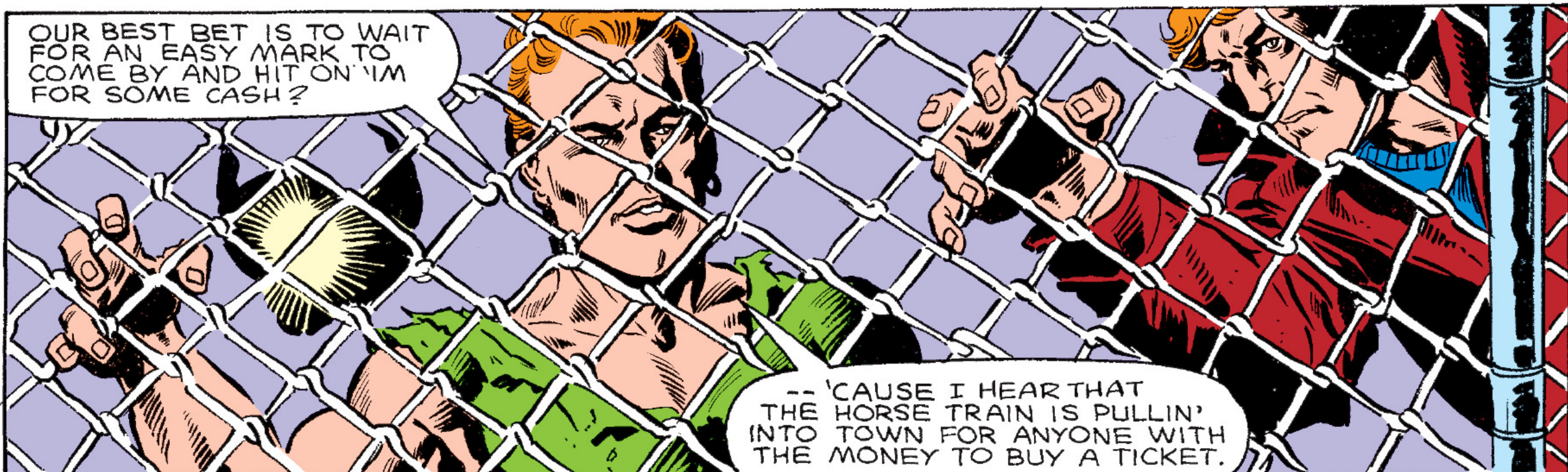
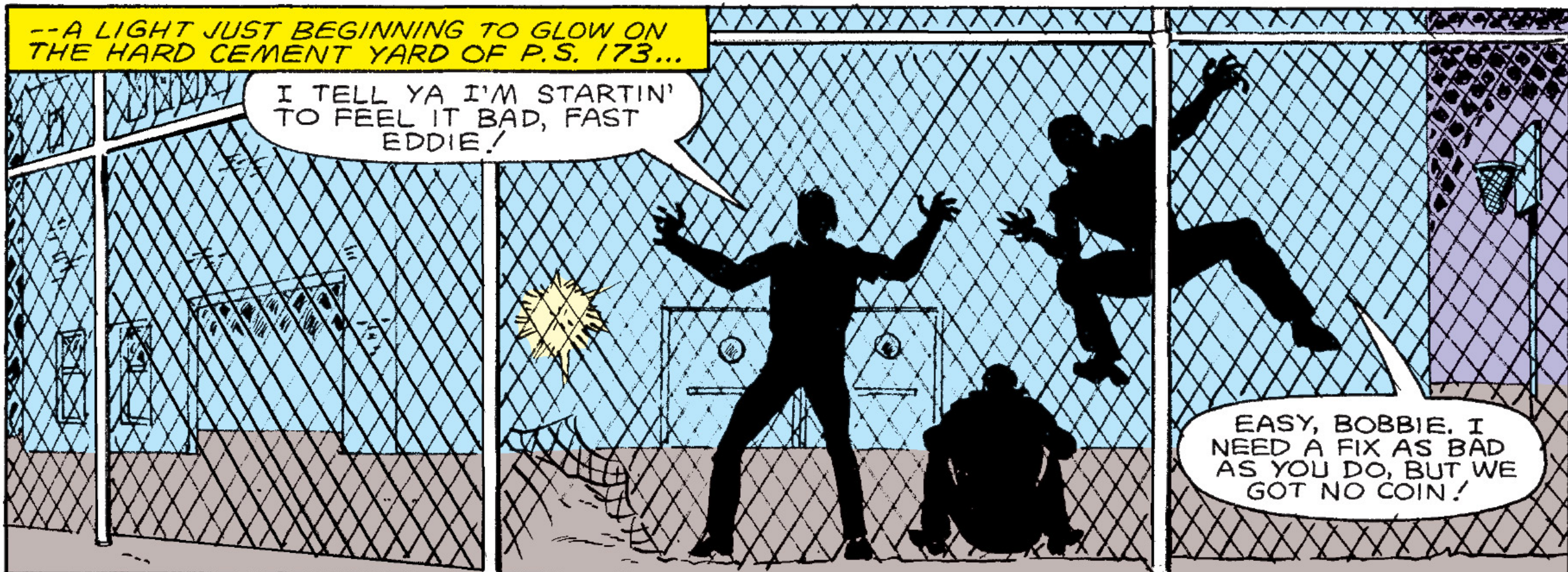
YES. I'VE SPOKEN TO THE ROSE. HE DIDN'T SOUND HAPPY ABOUT IT, BUT HE'S GOING AHEAD WITH THE PLAN.

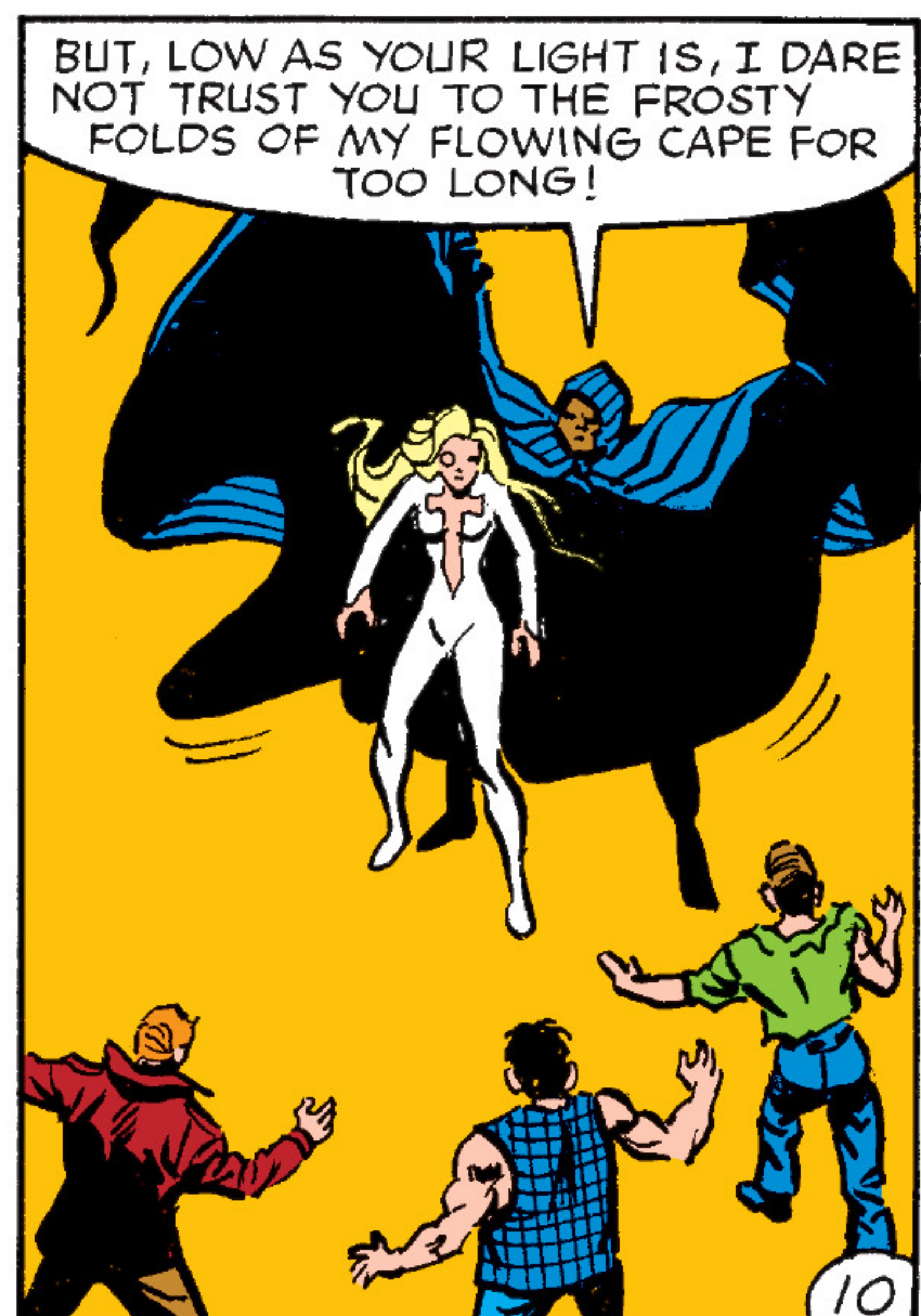
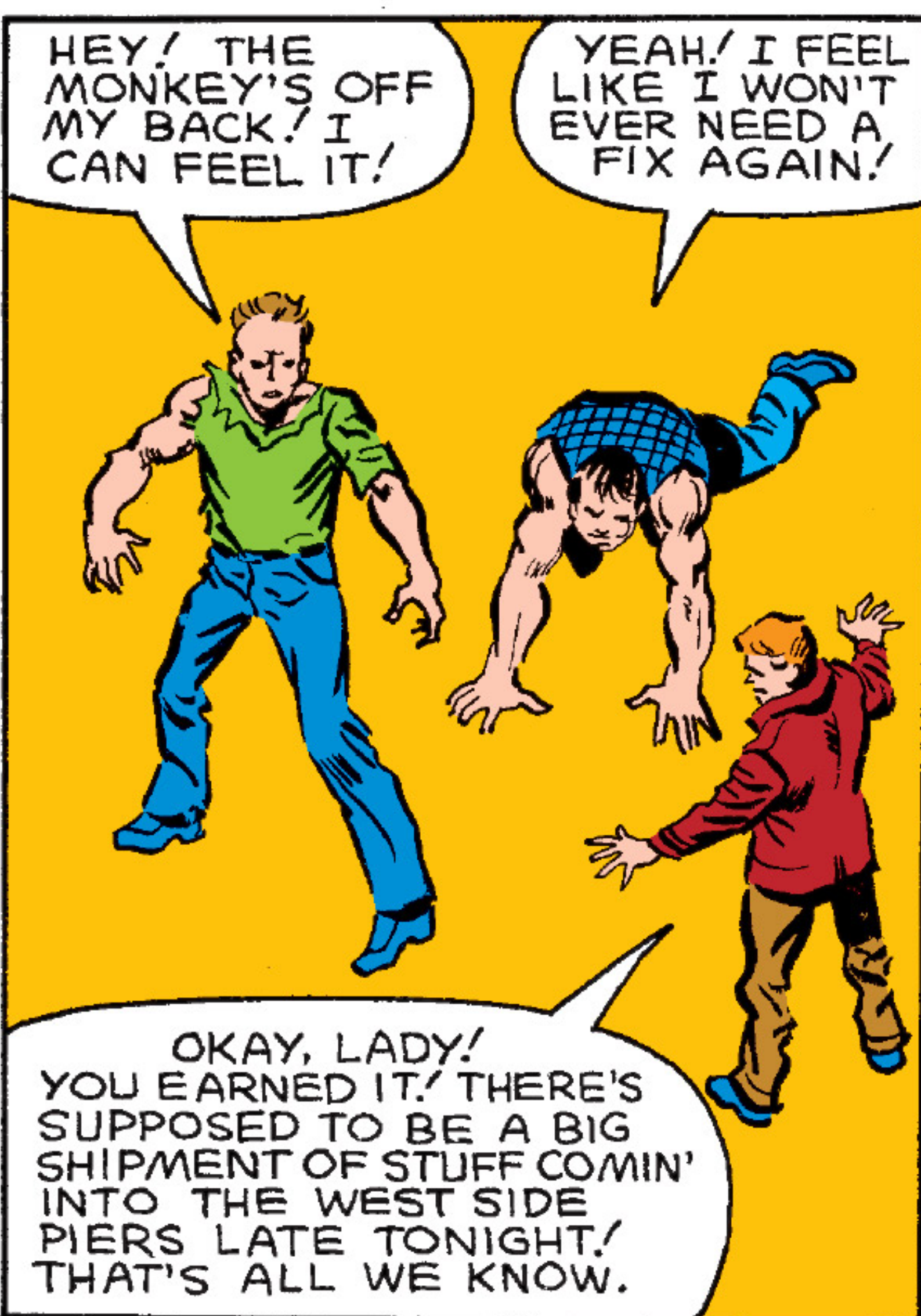
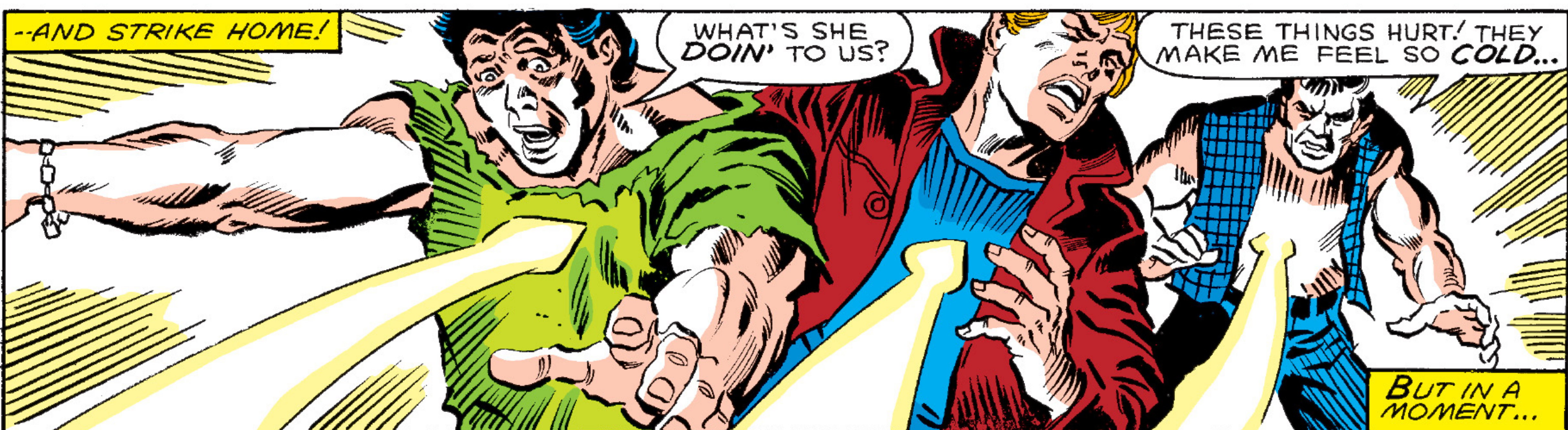
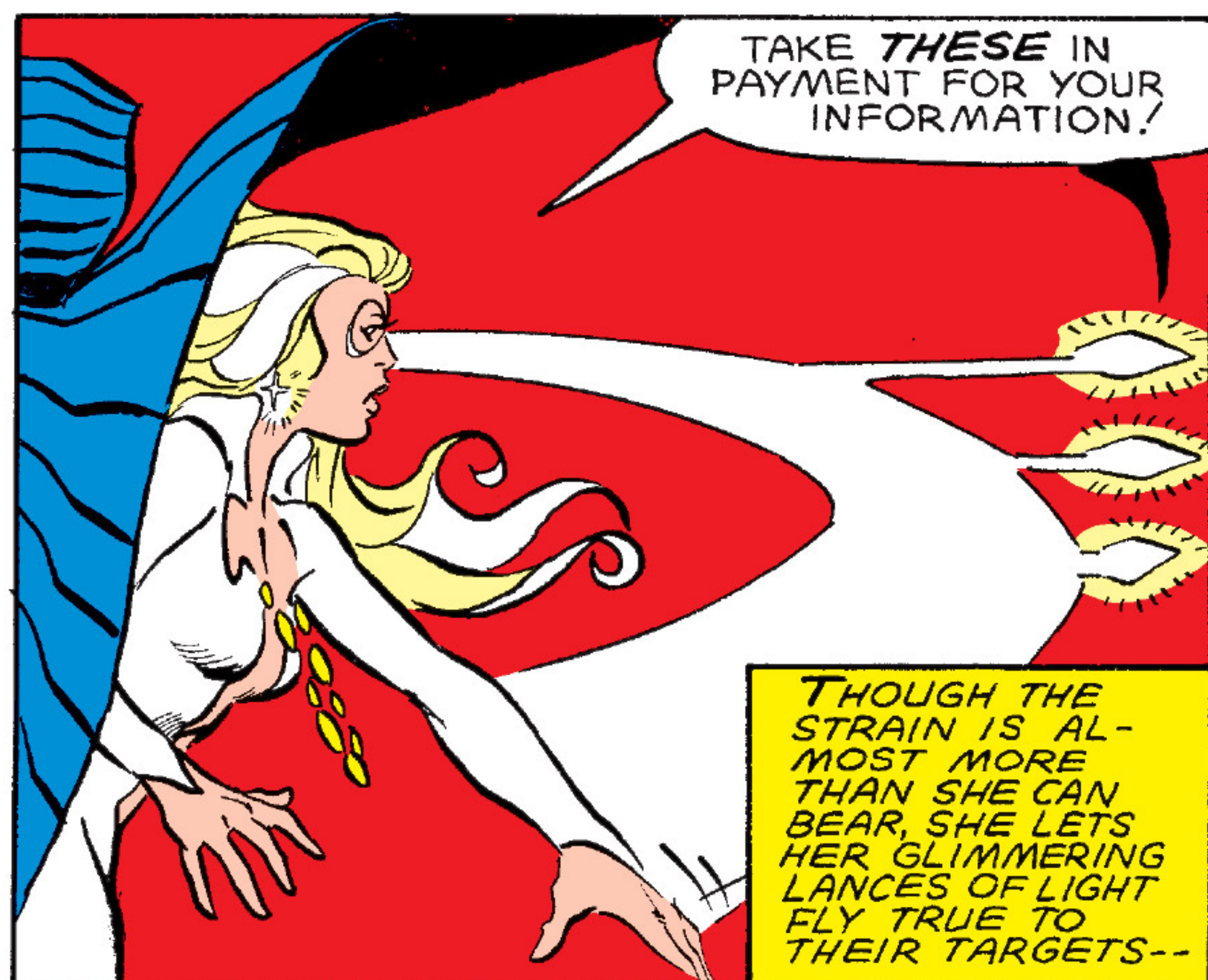
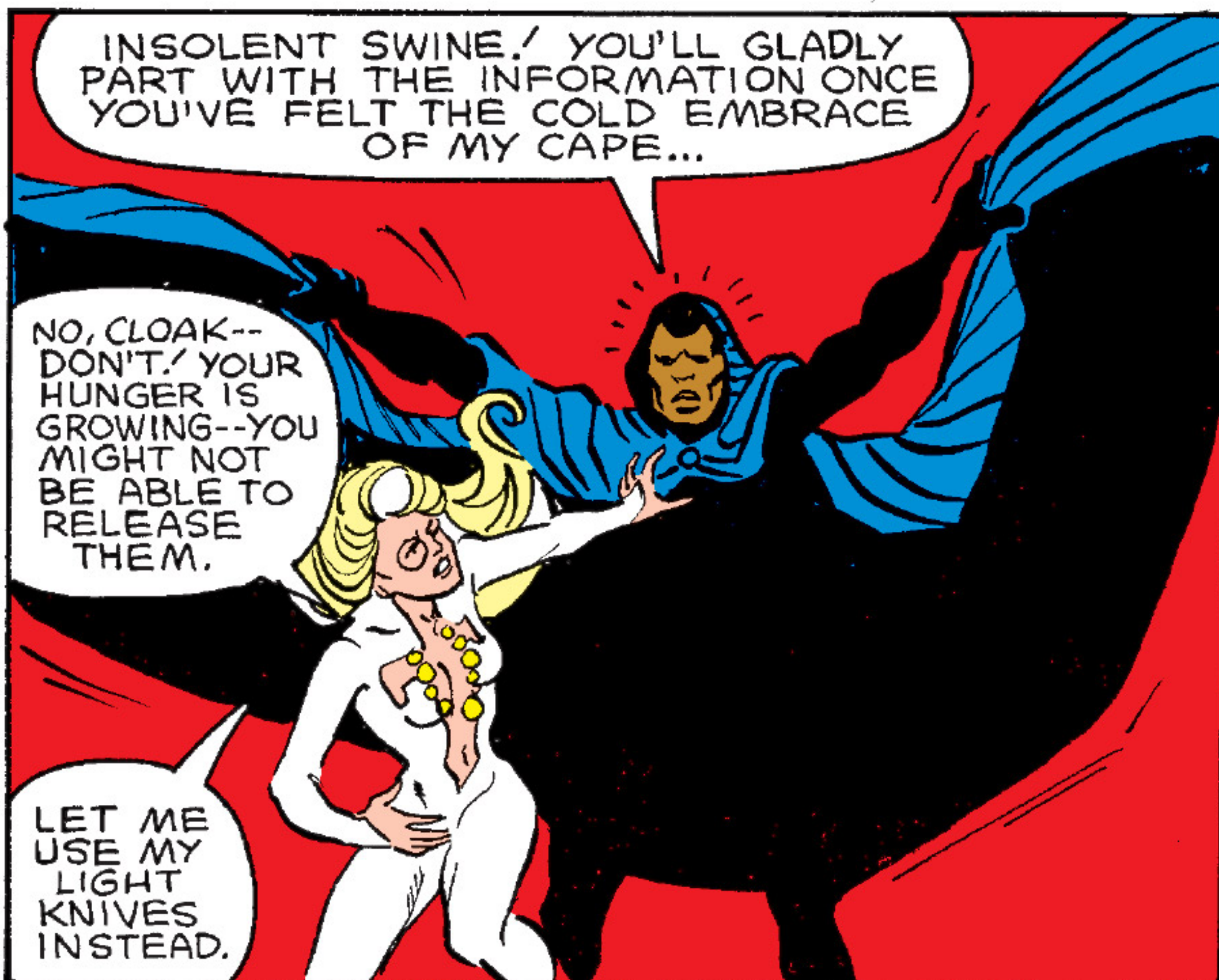
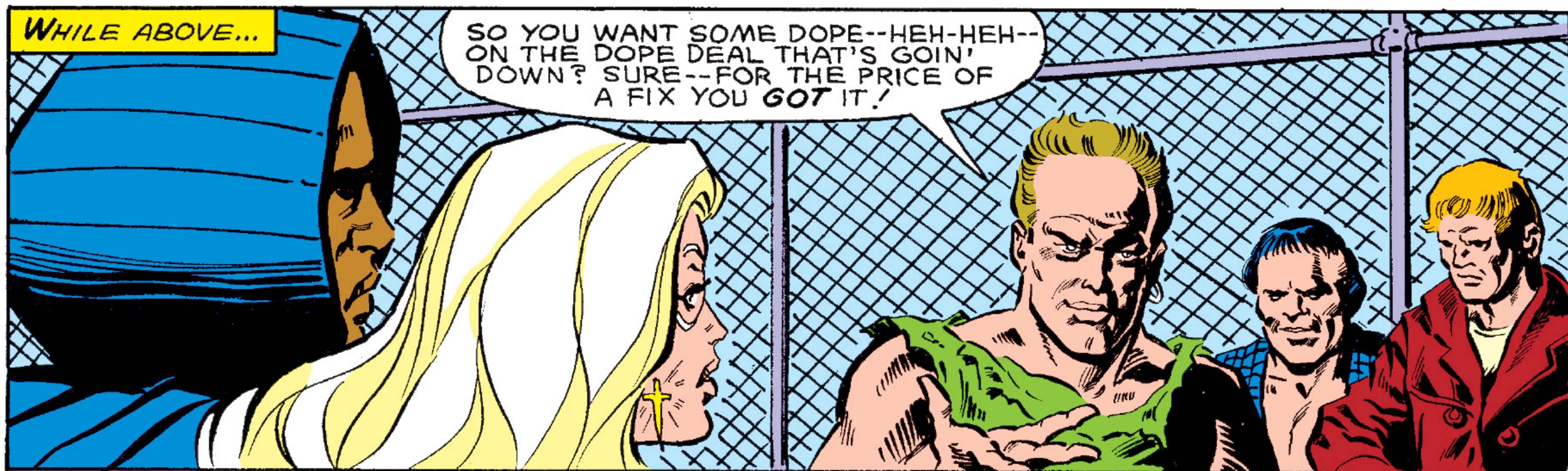
NO, HE *WOULDN'T* BE HAPPY ABOUT IT. THAT'S PART OF THE REASON I ASSIGNED IT TO HIM.

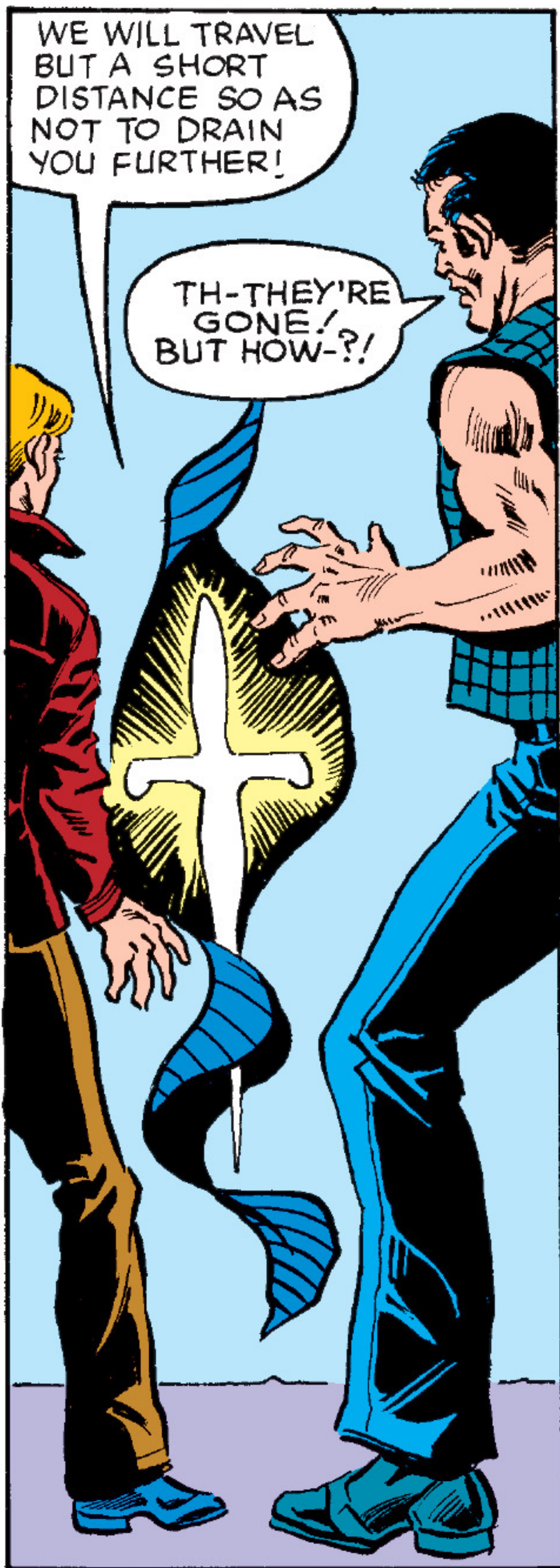
AS LONG AS HE FOLLOWS MY ORDERS, IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS ARE!

HE HAS AMBITIONS... DANGEROUS AMBITIONS. HE MUST BE SHOWN HIS PLACE.



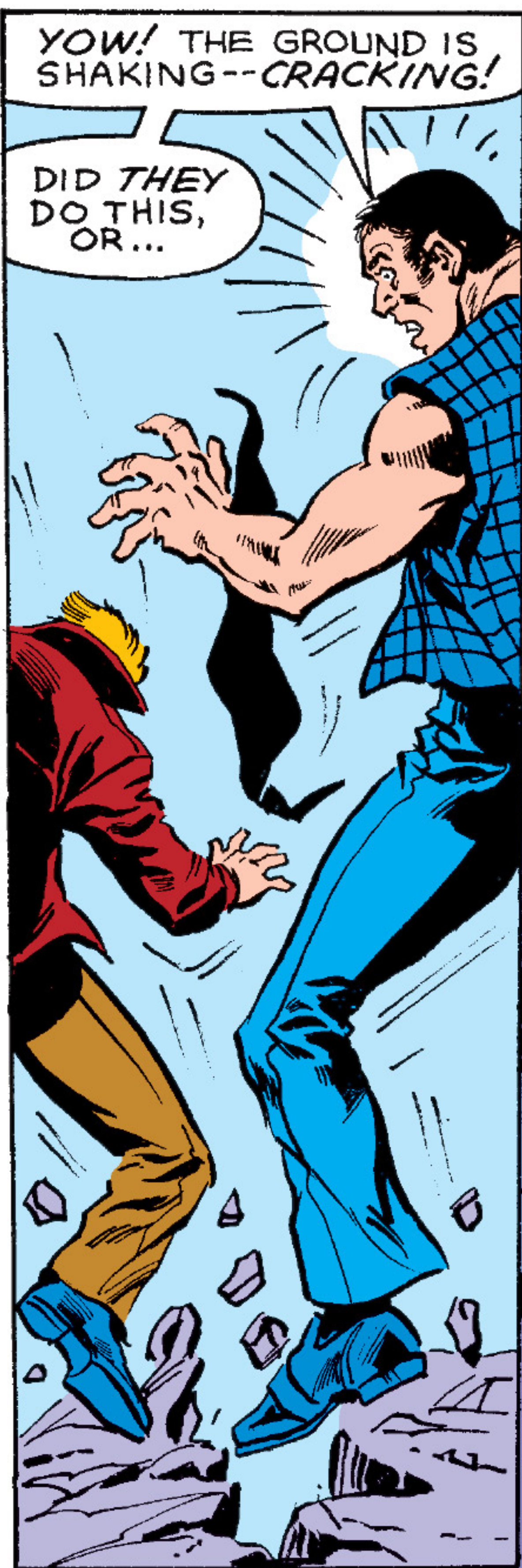






WE WILL TRAVEL BUT A SHORT DISTANCE SO AS NOT TO DRAIN YOU FURTHER!

TH-THEY'RE GONE! BUT HOW-?!



YOW! THE GROUND IS SHAKING--CRACKING!

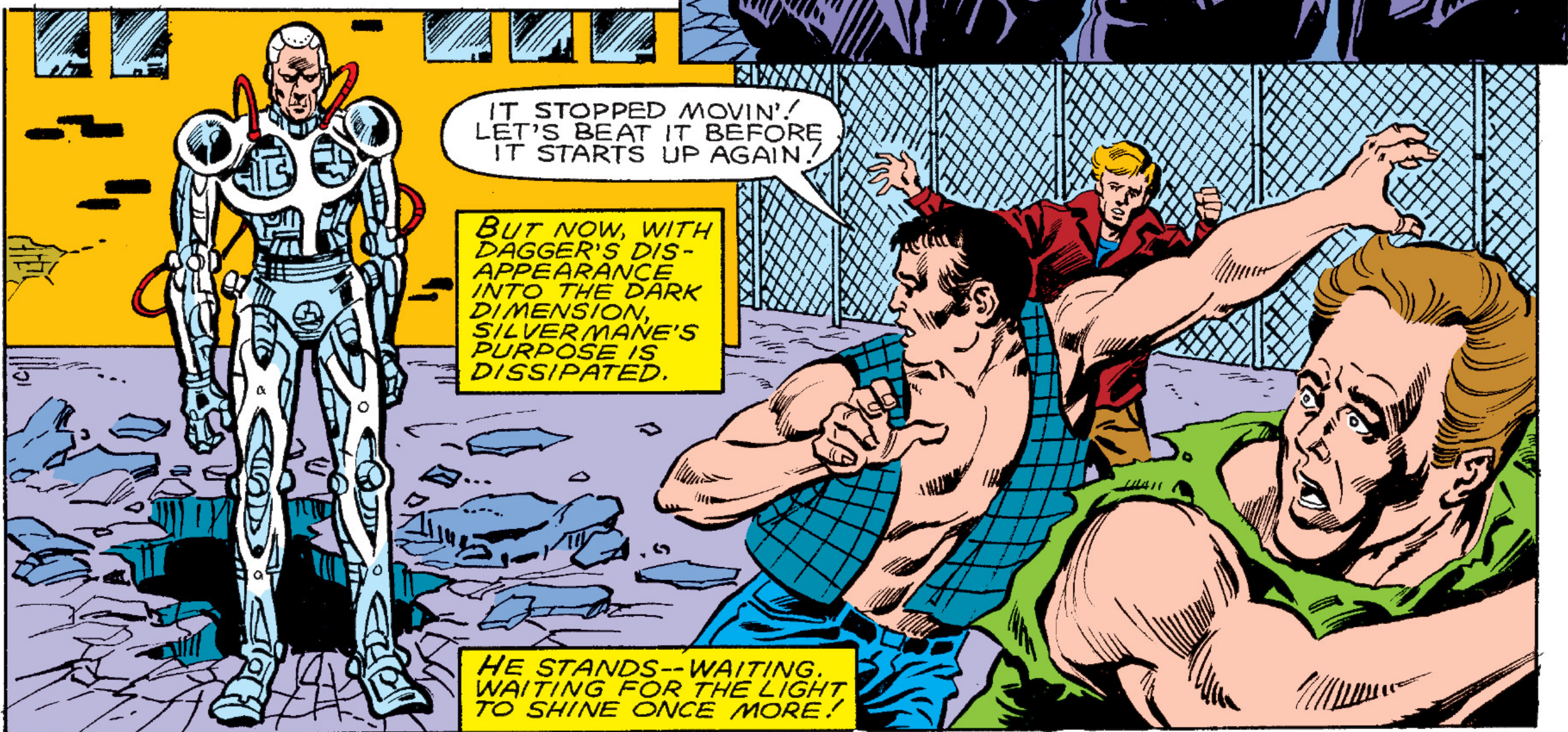
DID THEY DO THIS, OR...

EVEN AS THE LAST OF DAGGER'S LIGHT SLOWLY FADES WITHIN THE FOLDS OF GLOAK'S CAPE, THE ANSWER TO FAST EDDIE'S UNFINISHED QUESTION...

...BECOMES APPARENT!

WHAT'S THAT?!

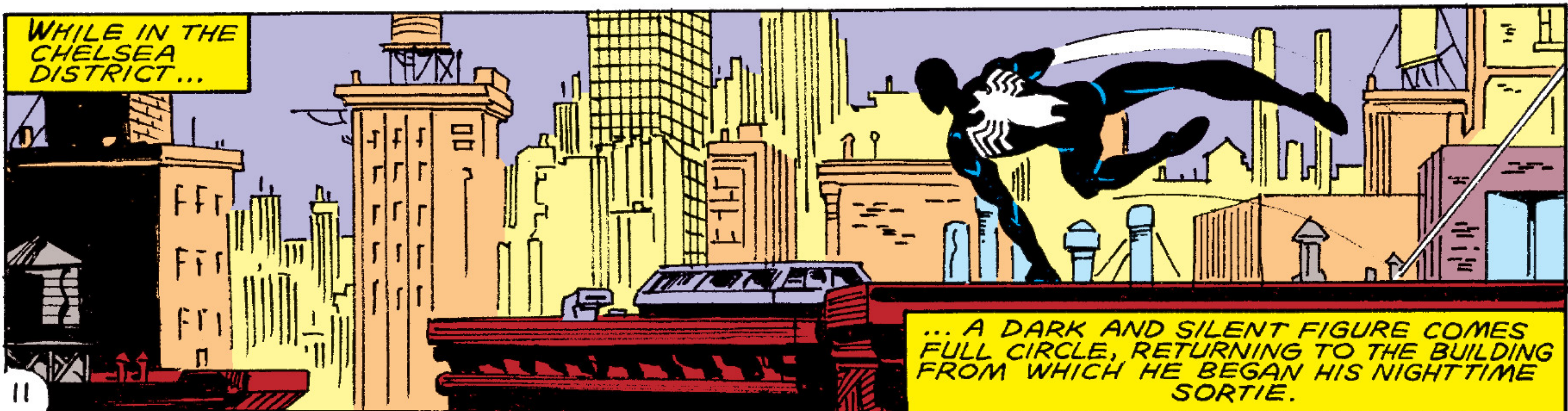
I DUNNO, BUT I AIN'T WAITING AROUND TO FIND OUT!



IT STOPPED MOVIN'! LET'S BEAT IT BEFORE IT STARTS UP AGAIN!

BUT NOW, WITH DAGGER'S DISAPPEARANCE INTO THE DARK DIMENSION, SILVERMANE'S PURPOSE IS DISSIPATED.

HE STANDS--WAITING. WAITING FOR THE LIGHT TO SHINE ONCE MORE!



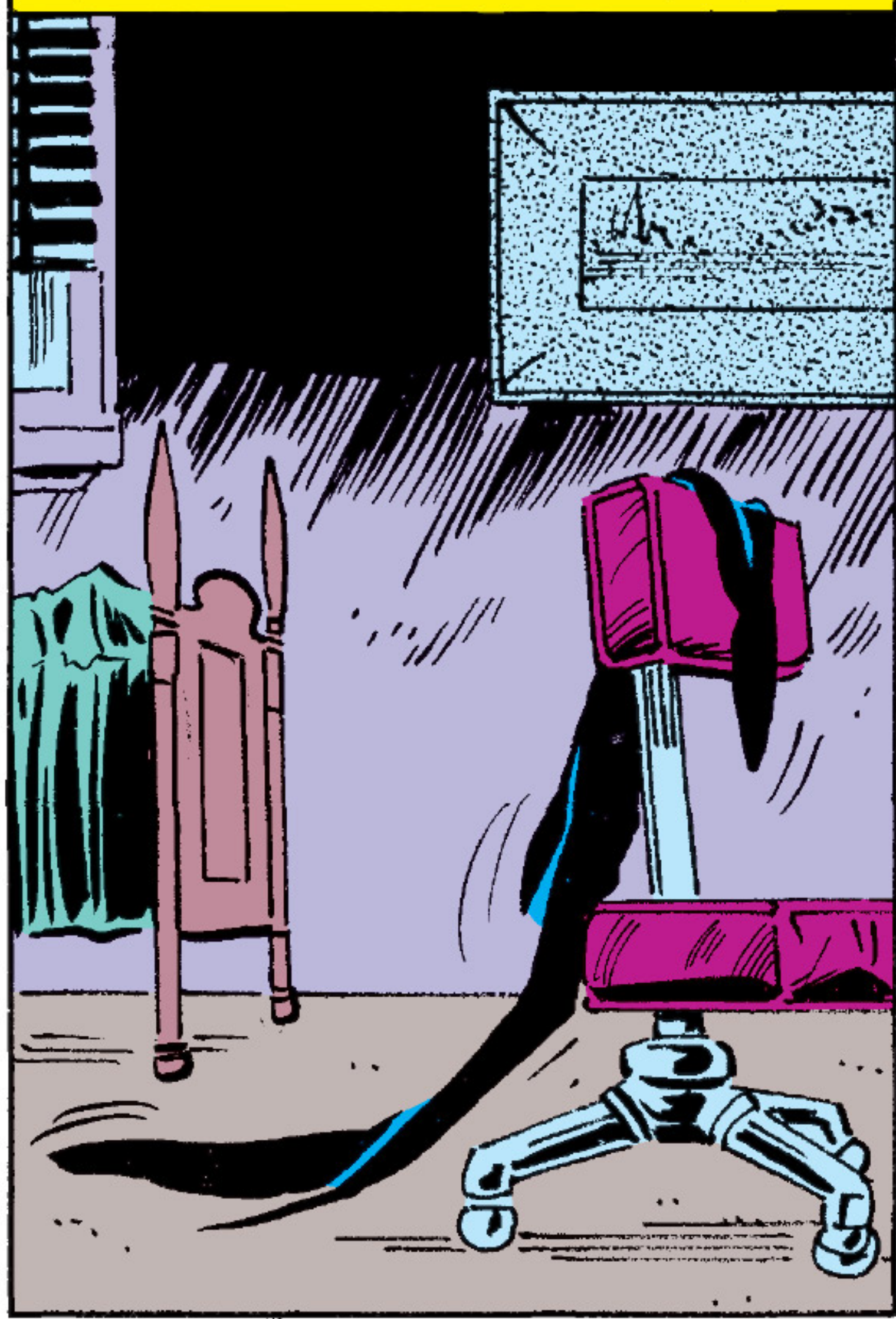
WHILE IN THE CHELSEA DISTRICT...

... A DARK AND SILENT FIGURE COMES FULL CIRCLE, RETURNING TO THE BUILDING FROM WHICH HE BEGAN HIS NIGHTTIME SORTIE.

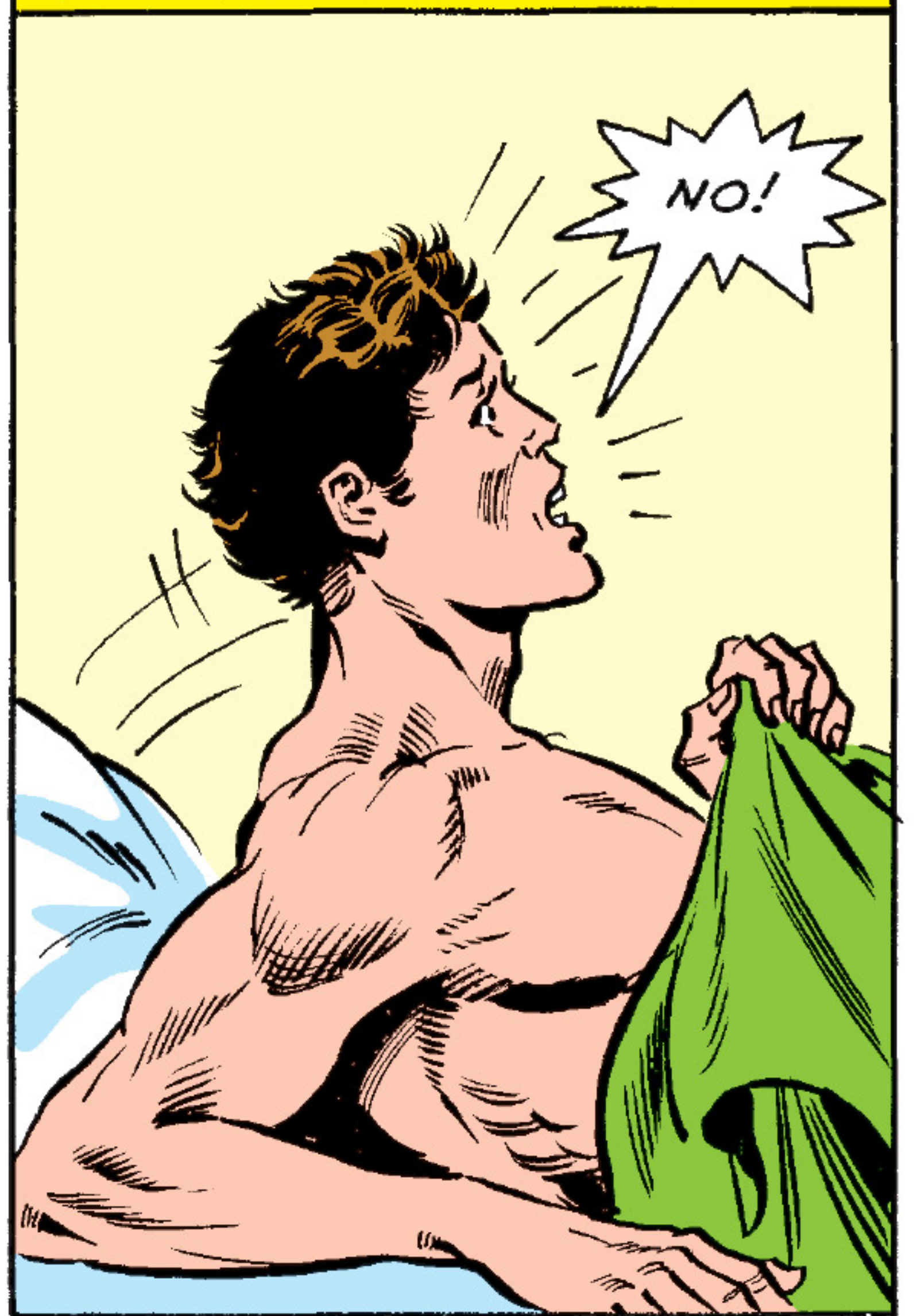
RETURNING PETER PARKER TO HIS BED, THE COSTUME SLINKS FROM HIM, CONTENT IN ITS NIGHT'S WORK.



IN A MOMENT, IT HAS DRAPED ITSELF ONCE AGAIN ON ITS CHAIR AND ALL IS AS IT WAS.



THAT'S WHEN PETER PARKER AWAKES WITH A START!



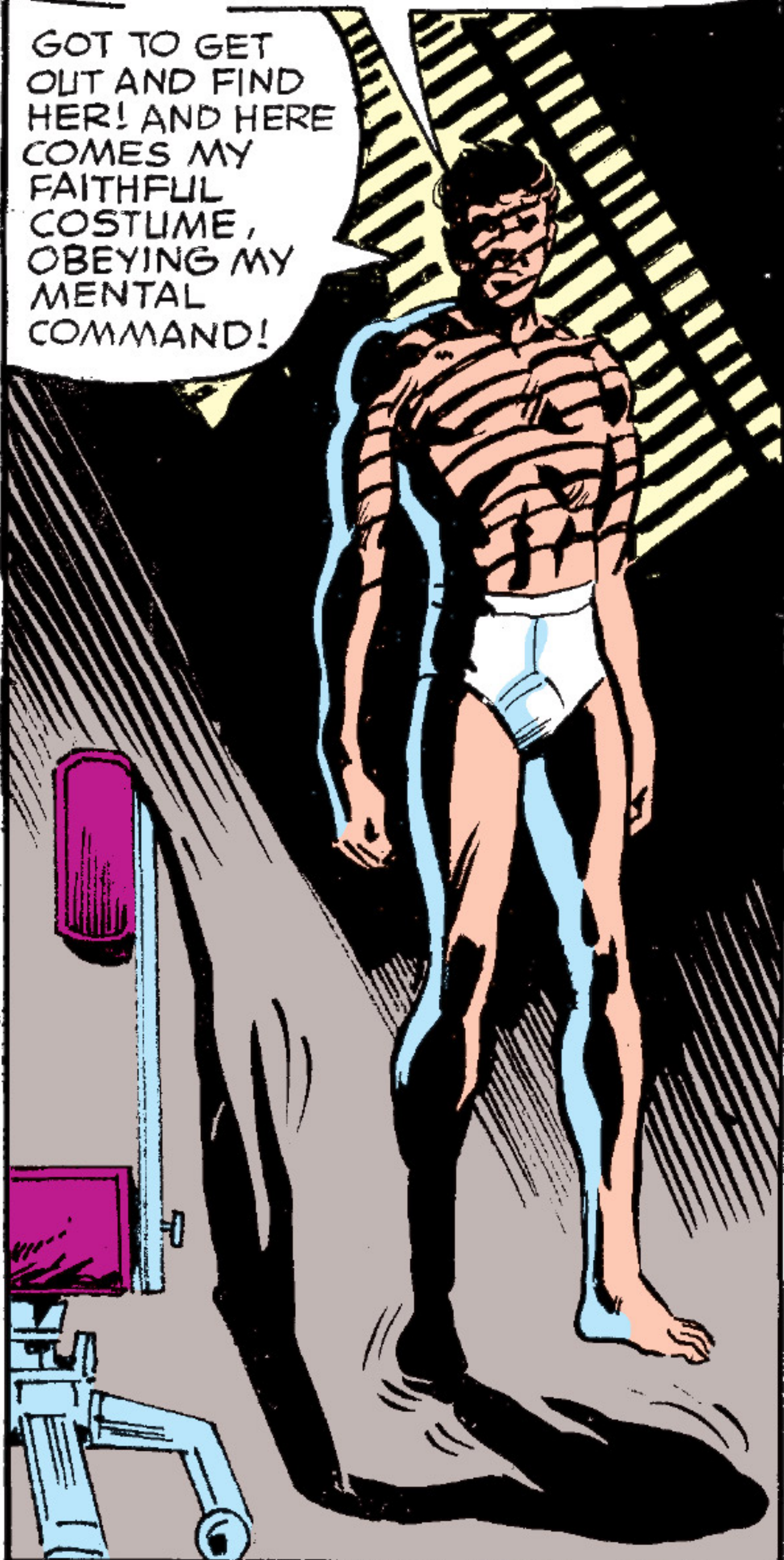
WHEW! ONE OF THOSE NIGHTMARES AGAIN! NO WONDER I HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING WELL LATELY!

I'M SO BUSHED RIGHT NOW I FEEL LIKE I HAVEN'T SLEPT AT ALL!

WAIT! I REMEMBER, I WAS GONNA LOOK FOR CLOAK AND DAGGER!

YEAH, DAGGER! SHE'S THE ONE WHO CAN HELP STOP THE MENACE OF SILVERMANE, I'M ALMOST SURE OF IT!

GOT TO GET OUT AND FIND HER! AND HERE COMES MY FAITHFUL COSTUME, OBEYING MY MENTAL COMMAND!

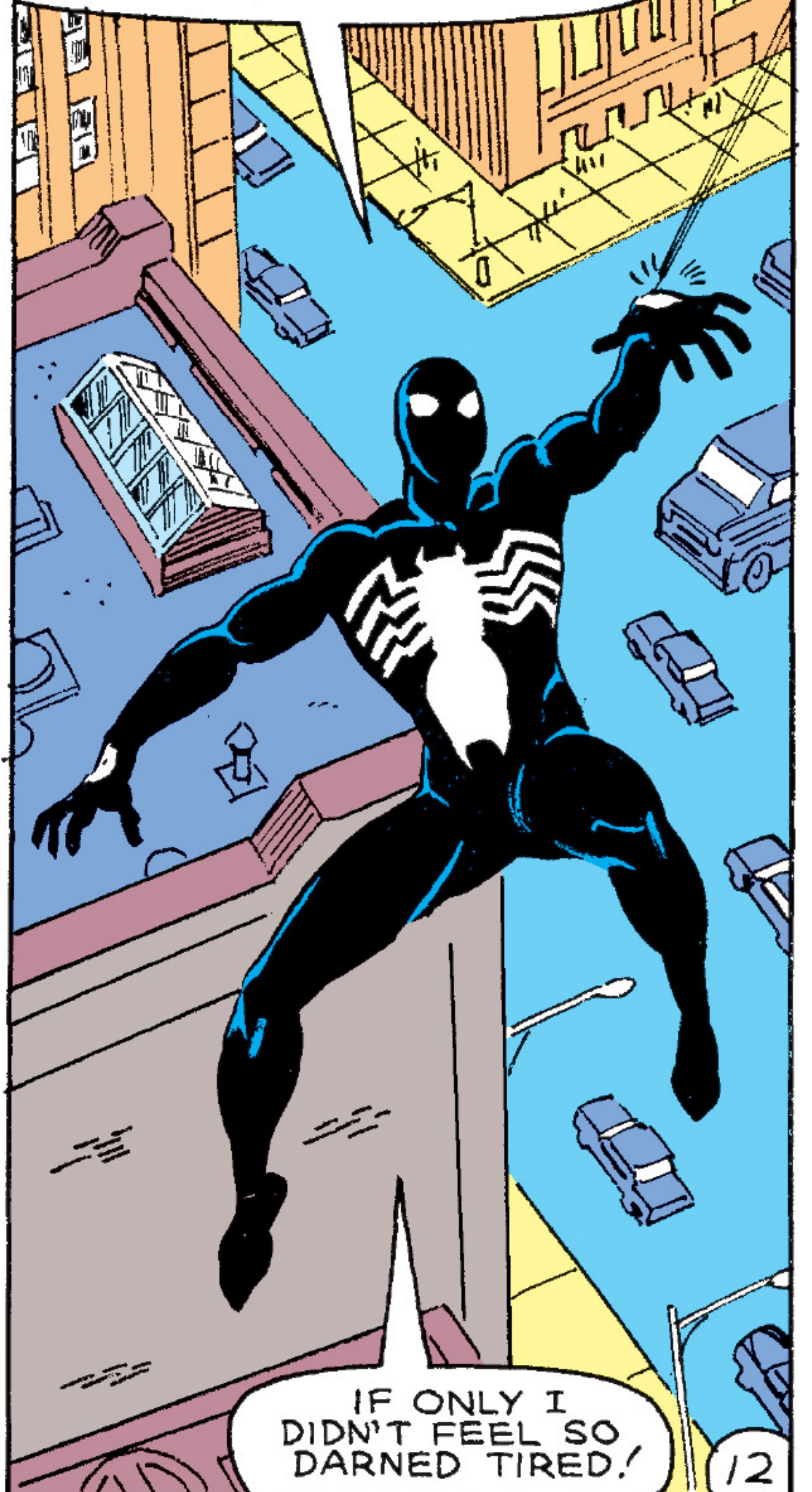


I'D BETTER CALL FELICIA AND SEE IF SHE WANTS TO JOIN ME AS THE BLACK CAT. IF I DIDN'T, SHE'D NEVER SPEAK TO ME AGAIN!

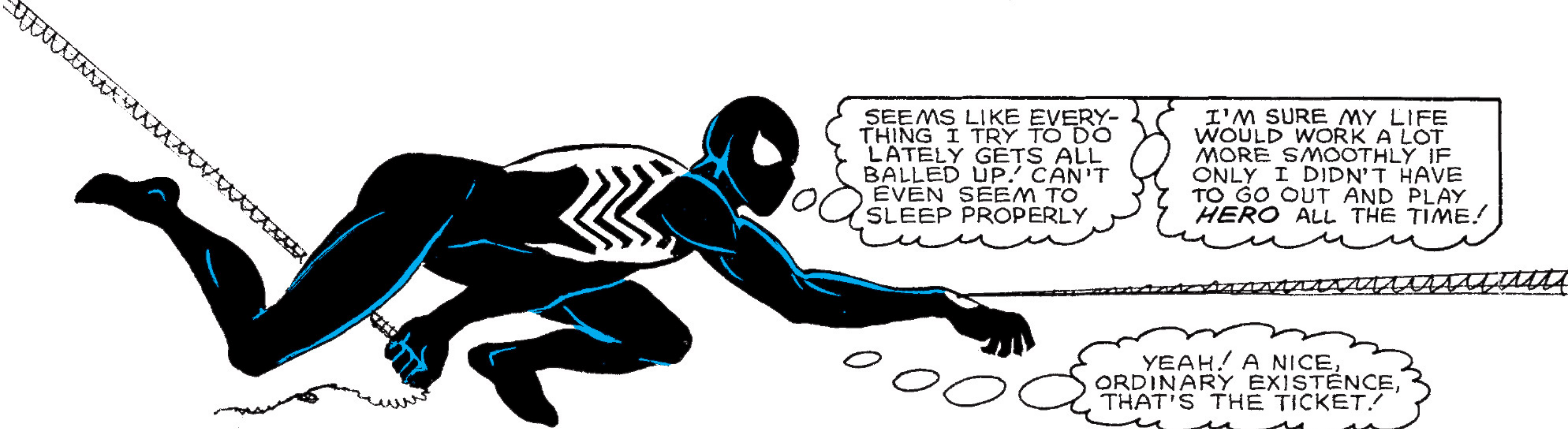


THAT'S FUNNY-- THERE'S NO ANSWER AT HER PLACE! SHE PROMISED ME SHE WOULDN'T TRY AND TACKLE SILVERMANE ALONE! WHERE COULD SHE BE?

WELL, I'LL CHECK IN WITH HER LATER. RIGHT NOW THERE'S A CITY THAT NEEDS SOME PROTECTION!



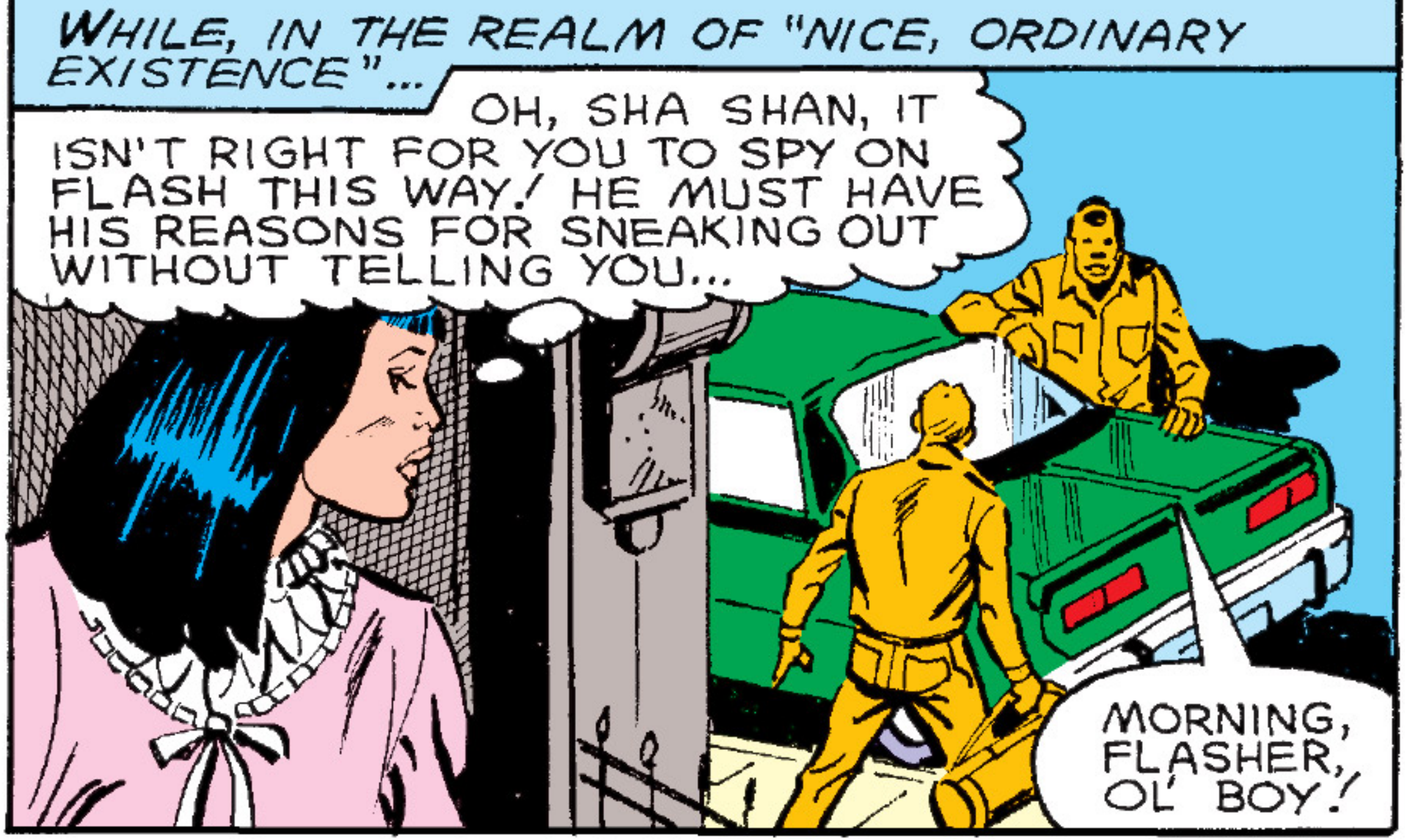
IF ONLY I DIDN'T FEEL SO DARNED TIRED!



SEEMS LIKE EVERYTHING I TRY TO DO LATELY GETS ALL BALLED UP. CAN'T EVEN SEEM TO SLEEP PROPERLY

I'M SURE MY LIFE WOULD WORK A LOT MORE SMOOTHLY IF ONLY I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO OUT AND PLAY HERO ALL THE TIME!

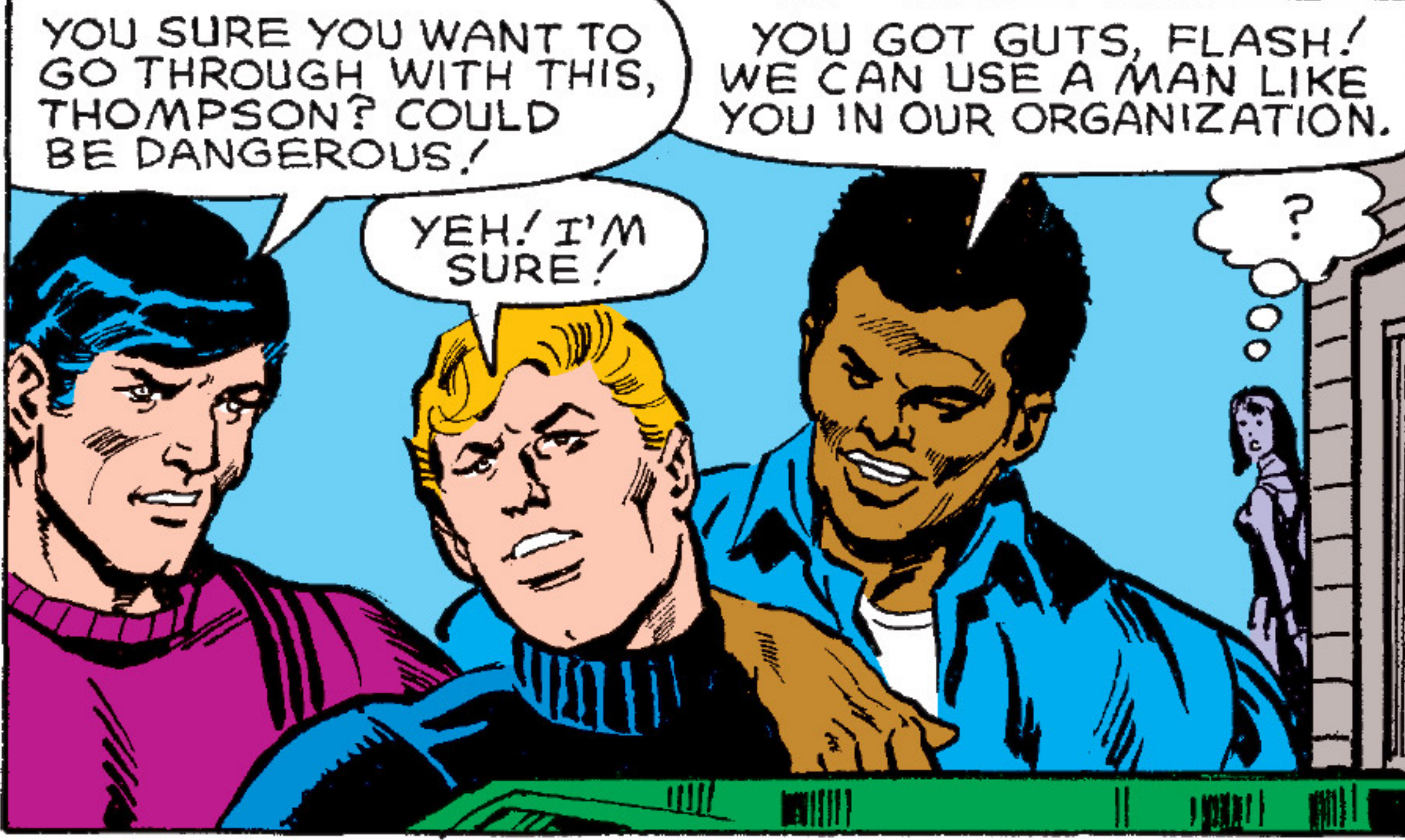
YEAH! A NICE, ORDINARY EXISTENCE, THAT'S THE TICKET!



WHILE, IN THE REALM OF "NICE, ORDINARY EXISTENCE"...

OH, SHA SHAN, IT ISN'T RIGHT FOR YOU TO SPY ON FLASH THIS WAY! HE MUST HAVE HIS REASONS FOR SNEAKING OUT WITHOUT TELLING YOU...

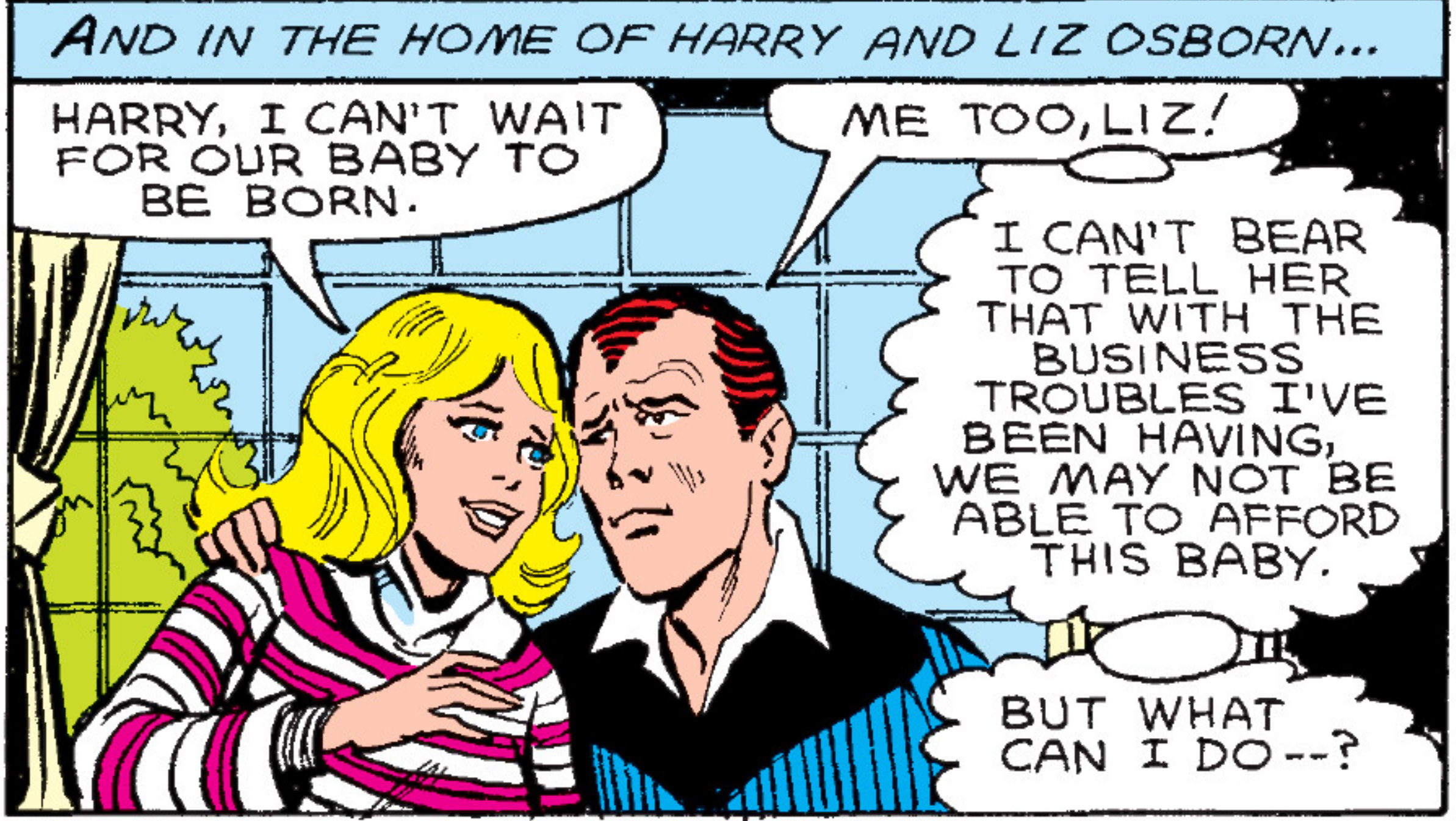
MORNING, FLASHER, OL' BOY!



YOU SURE YOU WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS, THOMPSON? COULD BE DANGEROUS!

YOU GOT GUTS, FLASH! WE CAN USE A MAN LIKE YOU IN OUR ORGANIZATION.

YEH! I'M SURE!



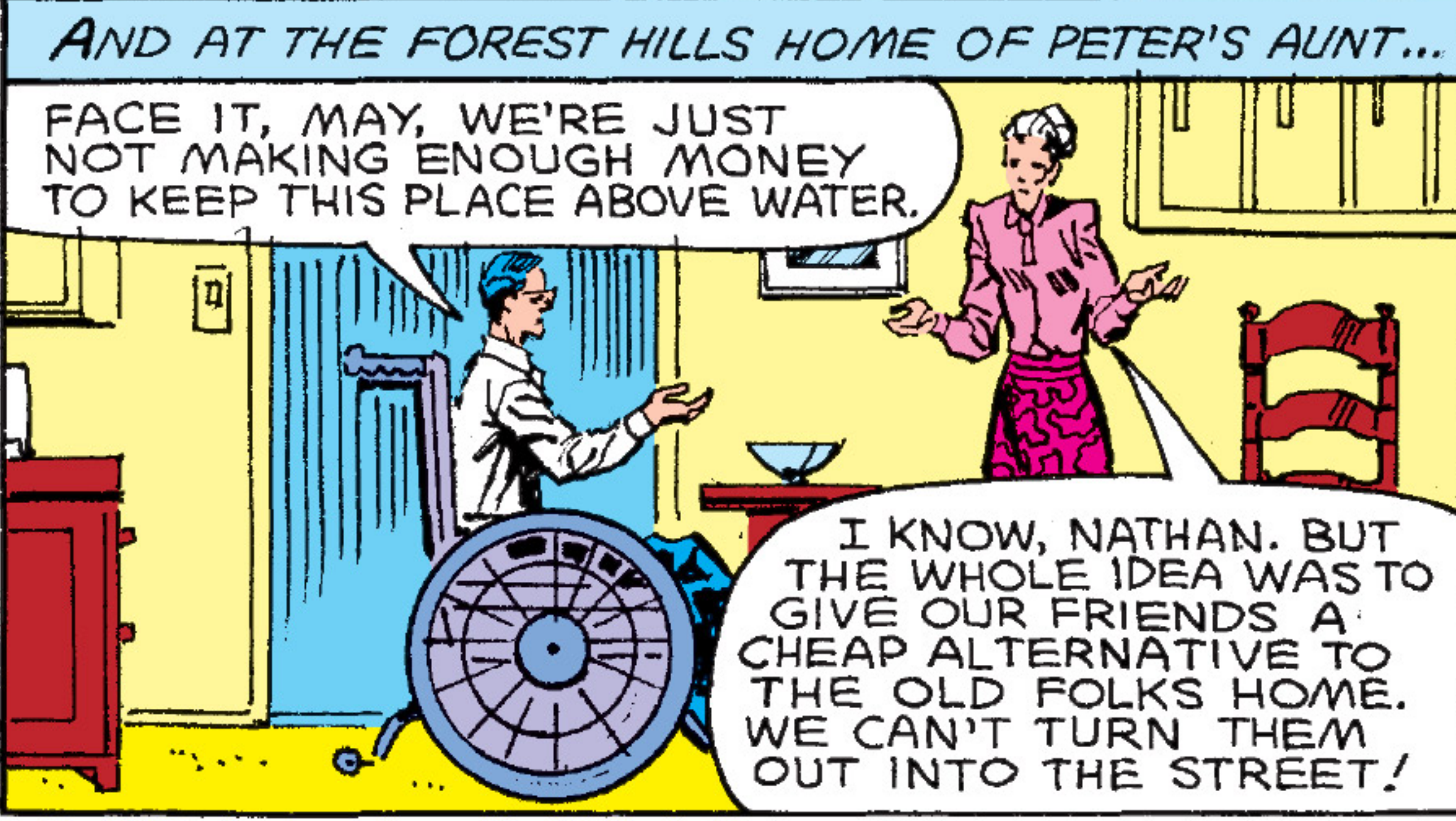
AND IN THE HOME OF HARRY AND LIZ OSBORN...

HARRY, I CAN'T WAIT FOR OUR BABY TO BE BORN.

ME TOO, LIZ!

I CAN'T BEAR TO TELL HER THAT WITH THE BUSINESS TROUBLES I'VE BEEN HAVING, WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD THIS BABY.

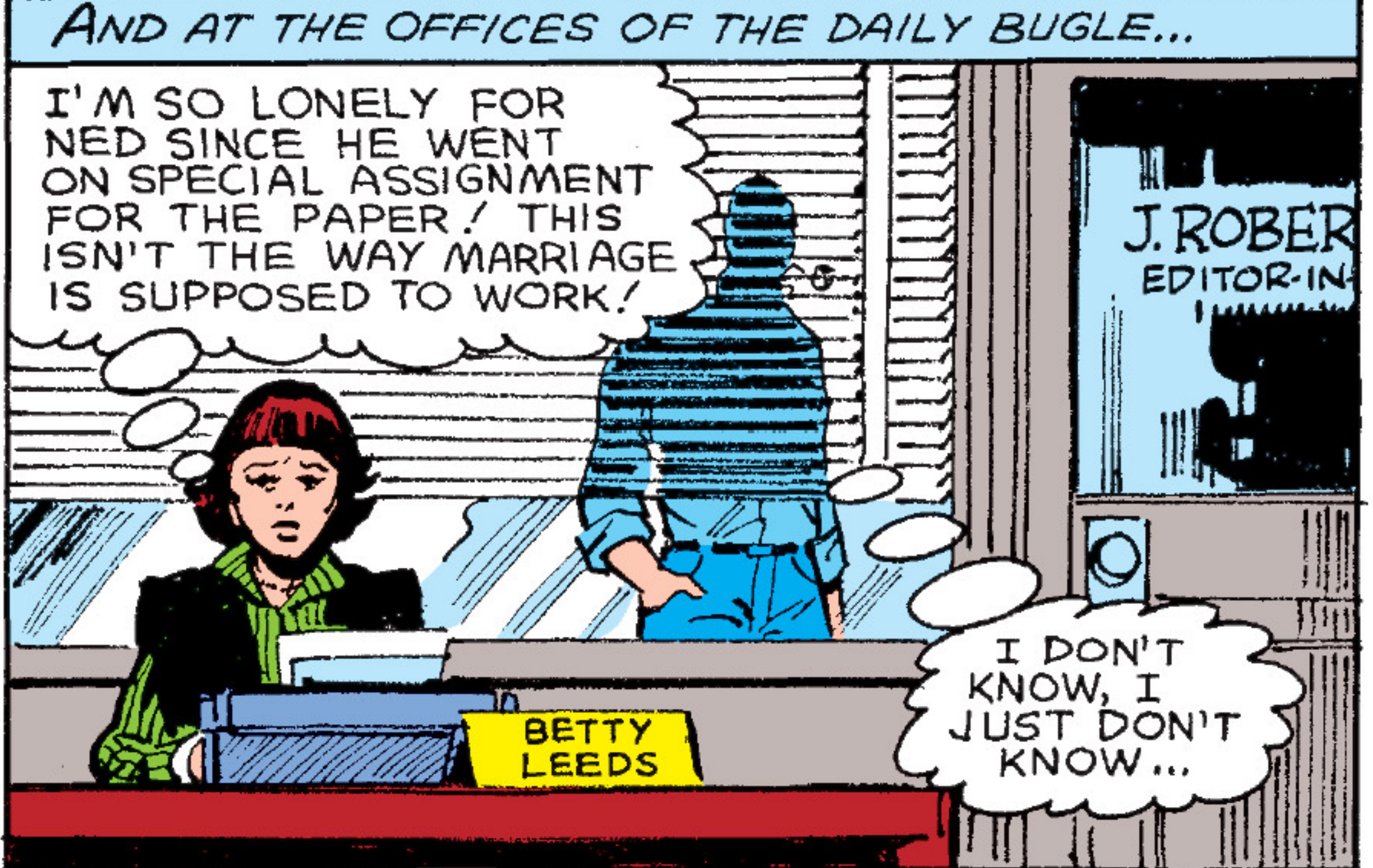
BUT WHAT CAN I DO--?



AND AT THE FOREST HILLS HOME OF PETER'S AUNT...

FACE IT, MAY, WE'RE JUST NOT MAKING ENOUGH MONEY TO KEEP THIS PLACE ABOVE WATER.

I KNOW, NATHAN. BUT THE WHOLE IDEA WAS TO GIVE OUR FRIENDS A CHEAP ALTERNATIVE TO THE OLD FOLKS HOME. WE CAN'T TURN THEM OUT INTO THE STREET!



AND AT THE OFFICES OF THE DAILY BUGLE...

I'M SO LONELY FOR NED SINCE HE WENT ON SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PAPER! THIS ISN'T THE WAY MARRIAGE IS SUPPOSED TO WORK!

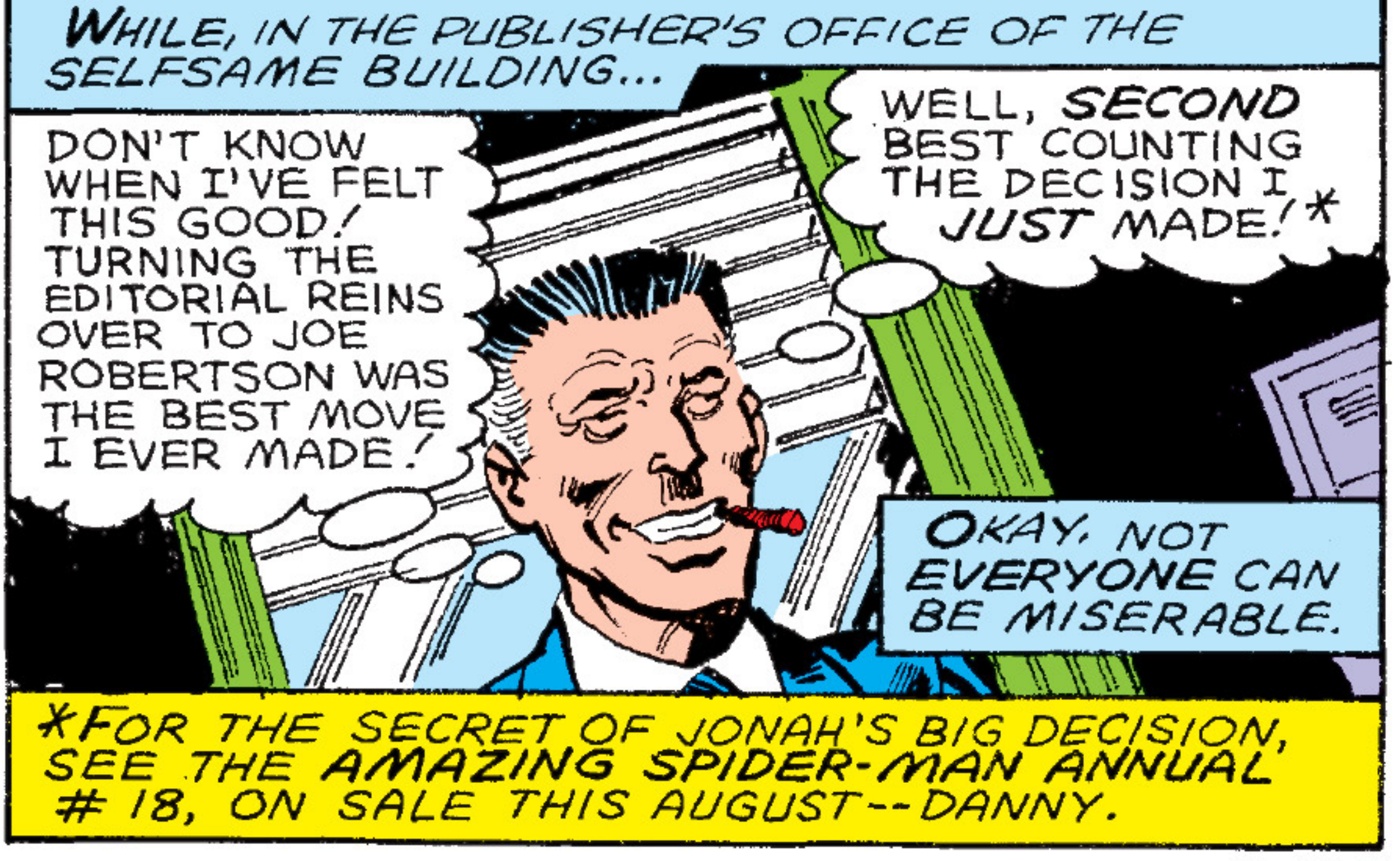
J. ROBERTSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I DON'T KNOW, I JUST DON'T KNOW...



AM I DOING A GOOD JOB AS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF? IT SEEMS I'M SURLY ALL THE TIME, SNAPPING AT THE WHOLE STAFF!

MAYBE IT IS TOO BIG A JOB FOR ME! MAYBE I JUST CAN'T CUT IT!



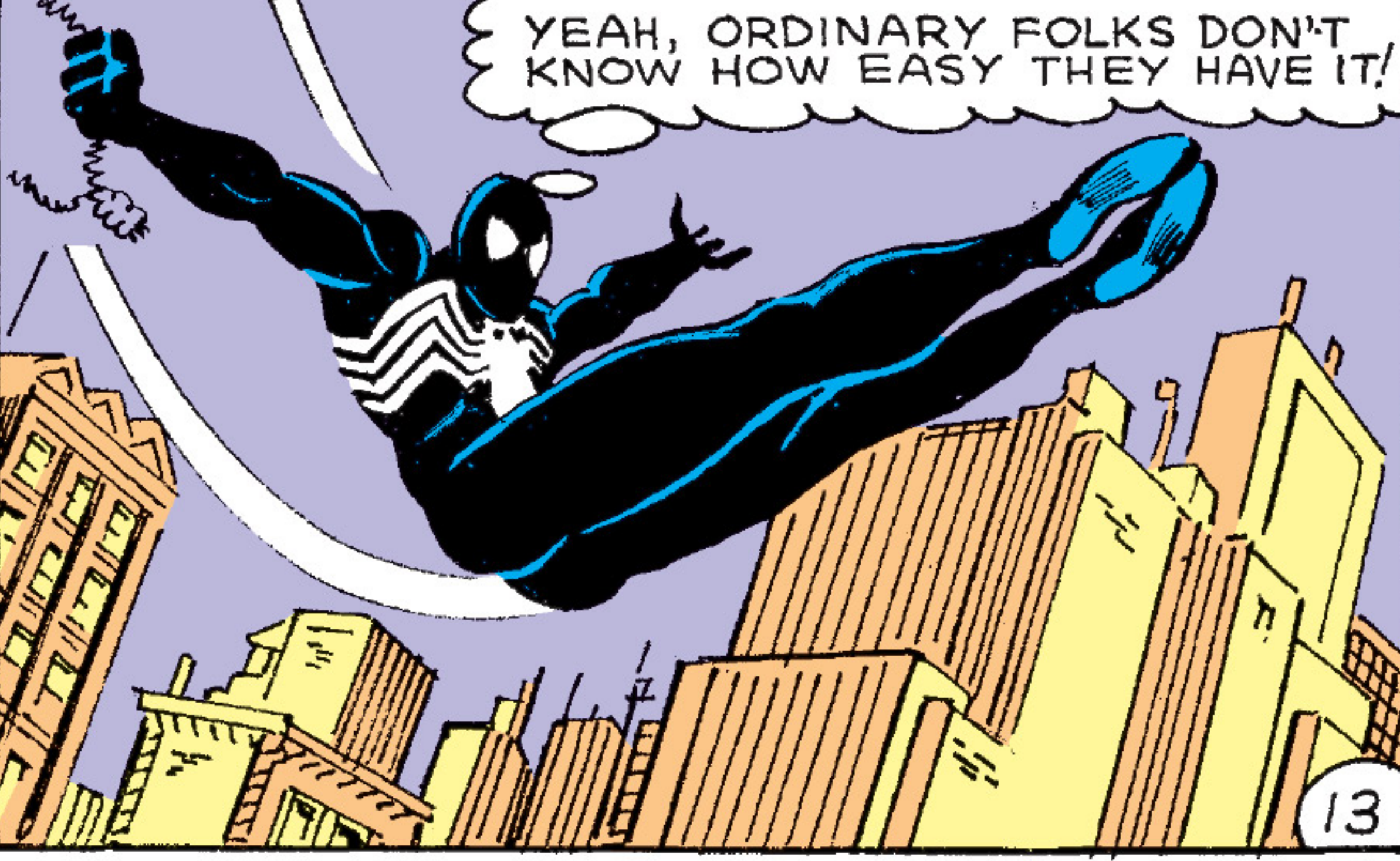
WHILE, IN THE PUBLISHER'S OFFICE OF THE SELFSAME BUILDING...

DON'T KNOW WHEN I'VE FELT THIS GOOD! TURNING THE EDITORIAL REINS OVER TO JOE ROBERTSON WAS THE BEST MOVE I EVER MADE!

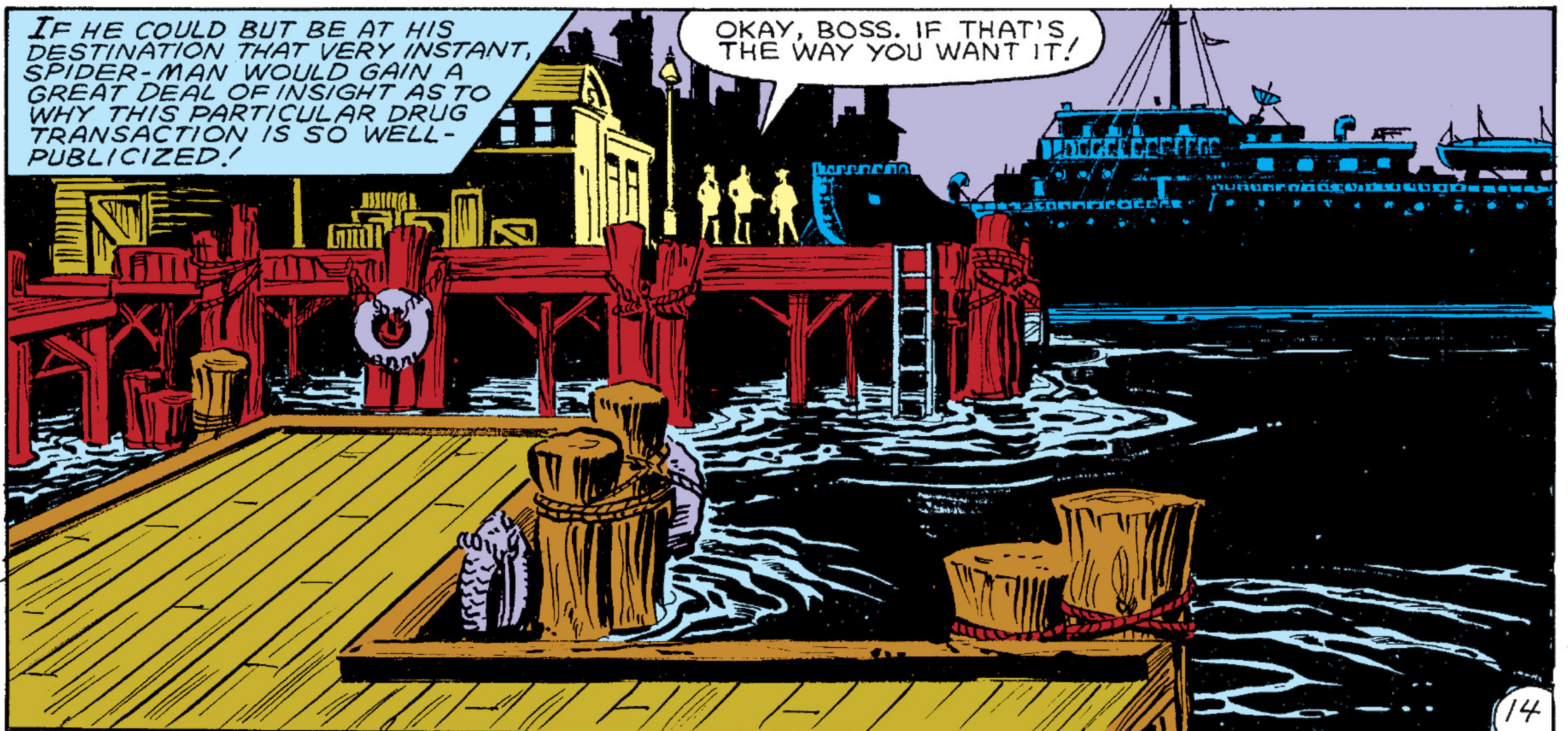
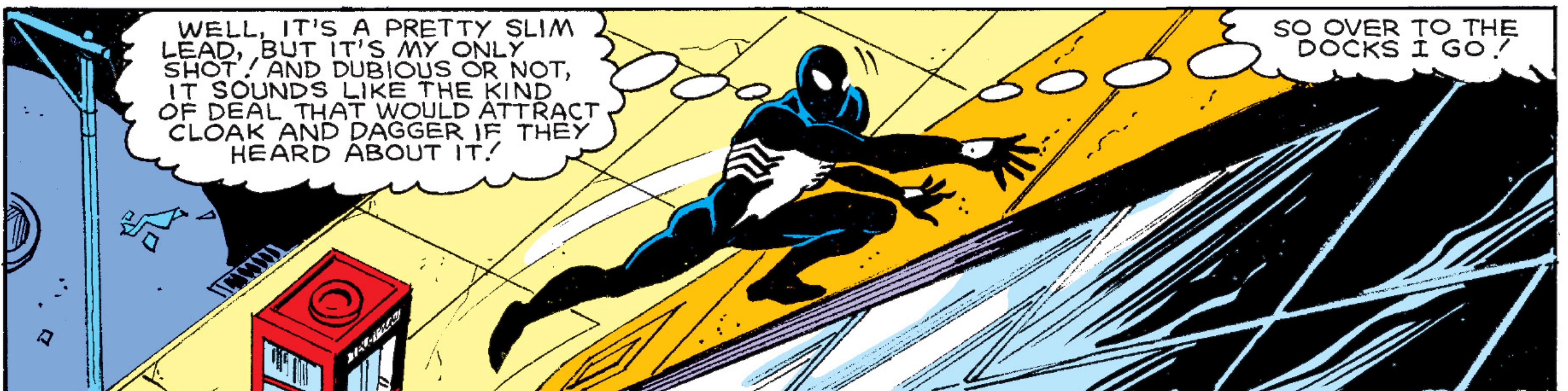
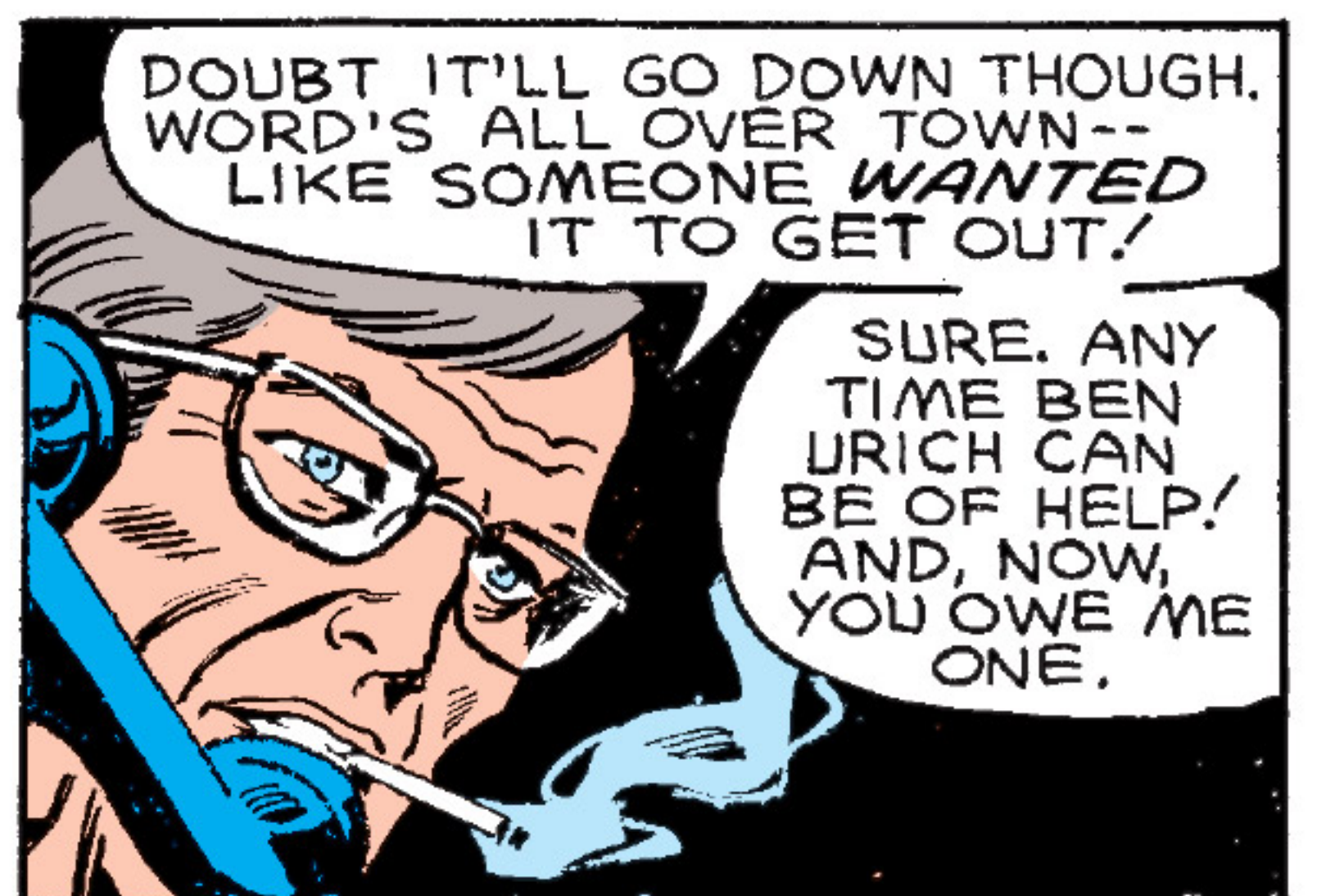
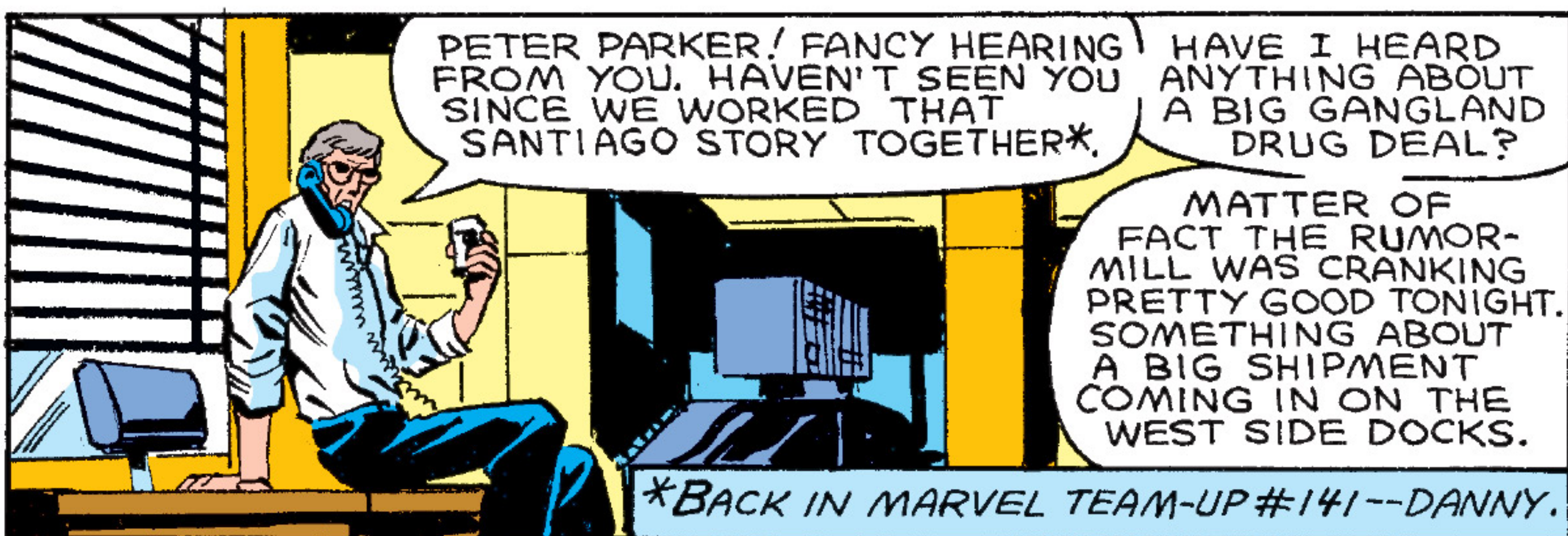
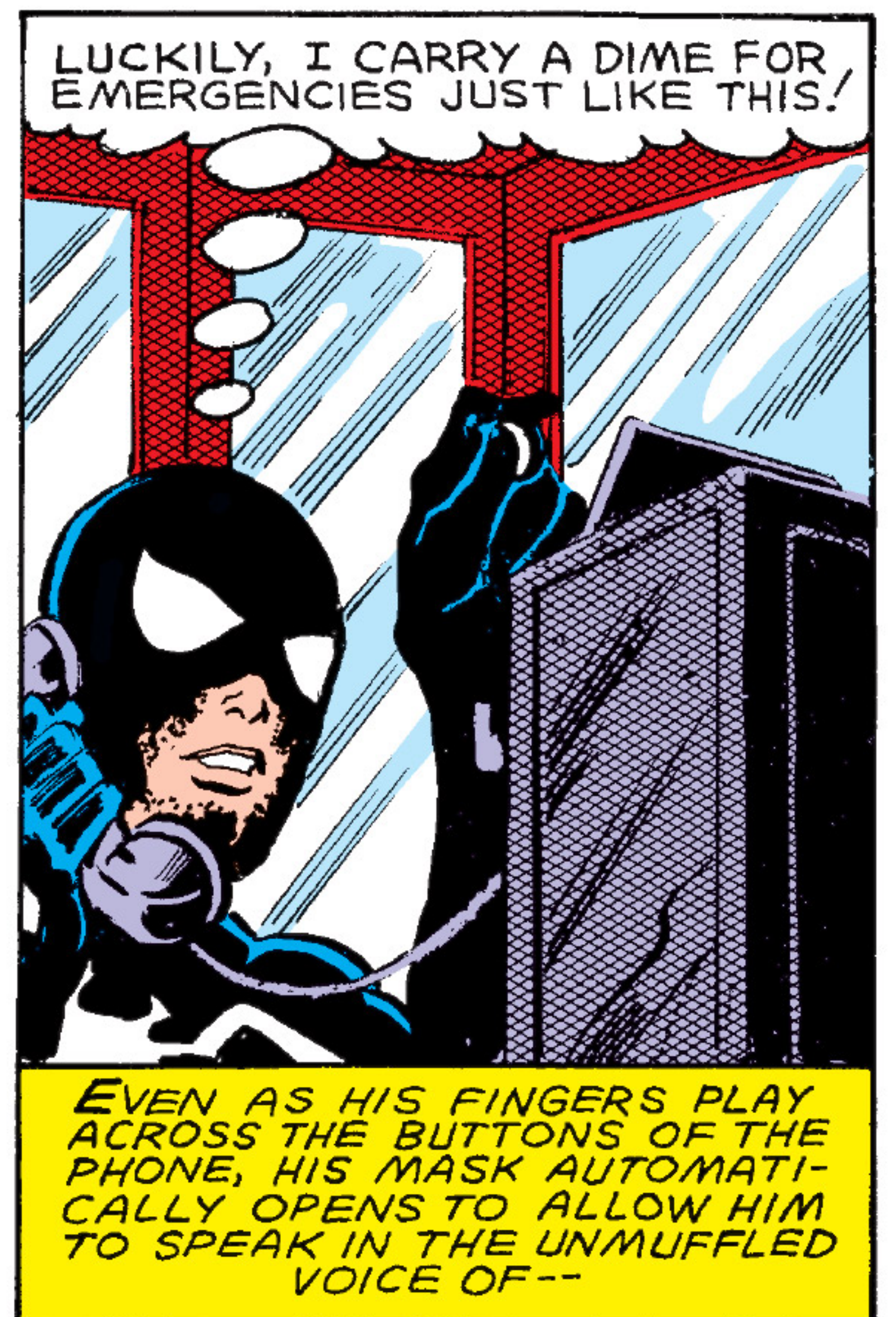
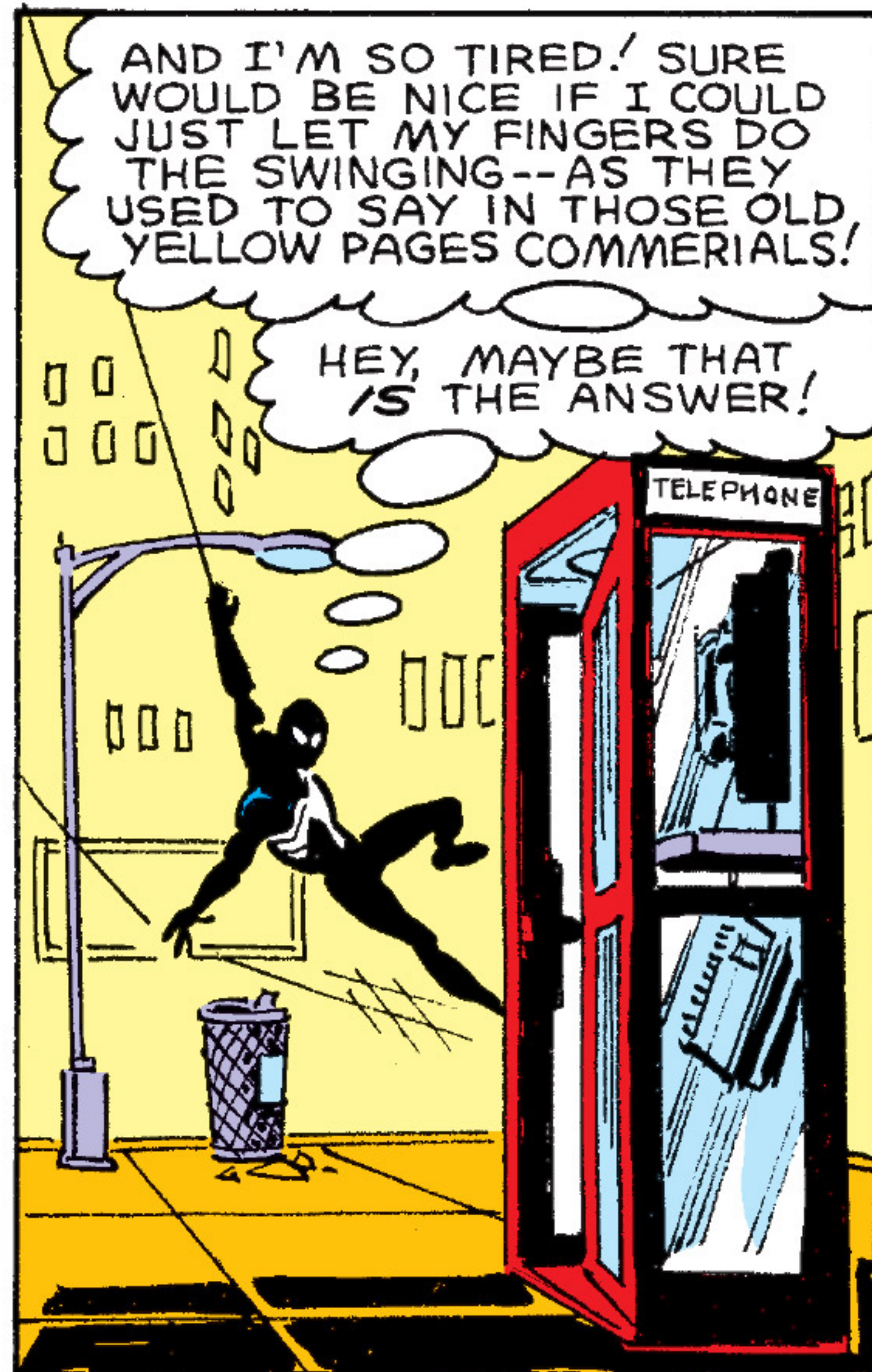
WELL, SECOND BEST COUNTING THE DECISION I JUST MADE! *

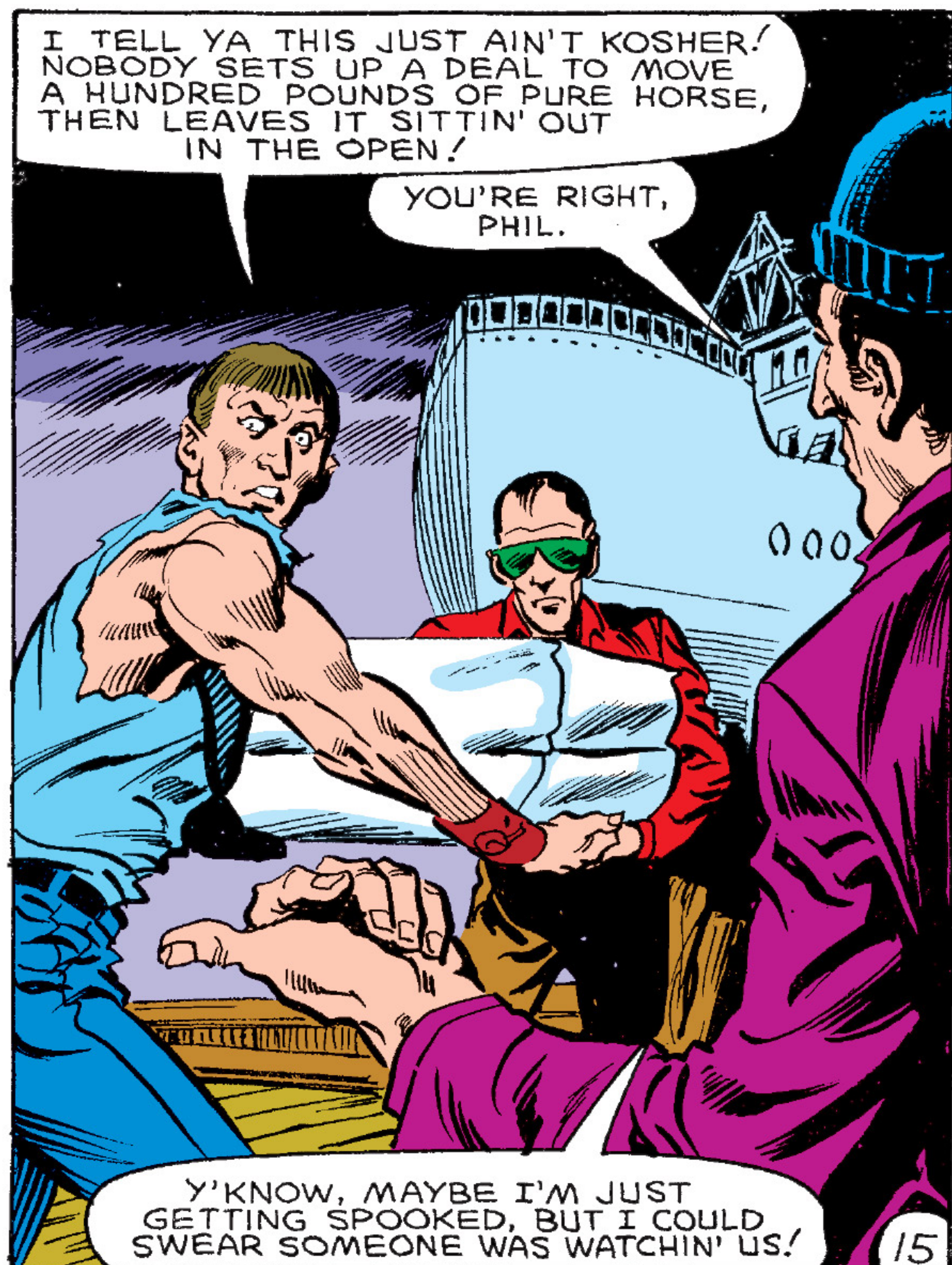
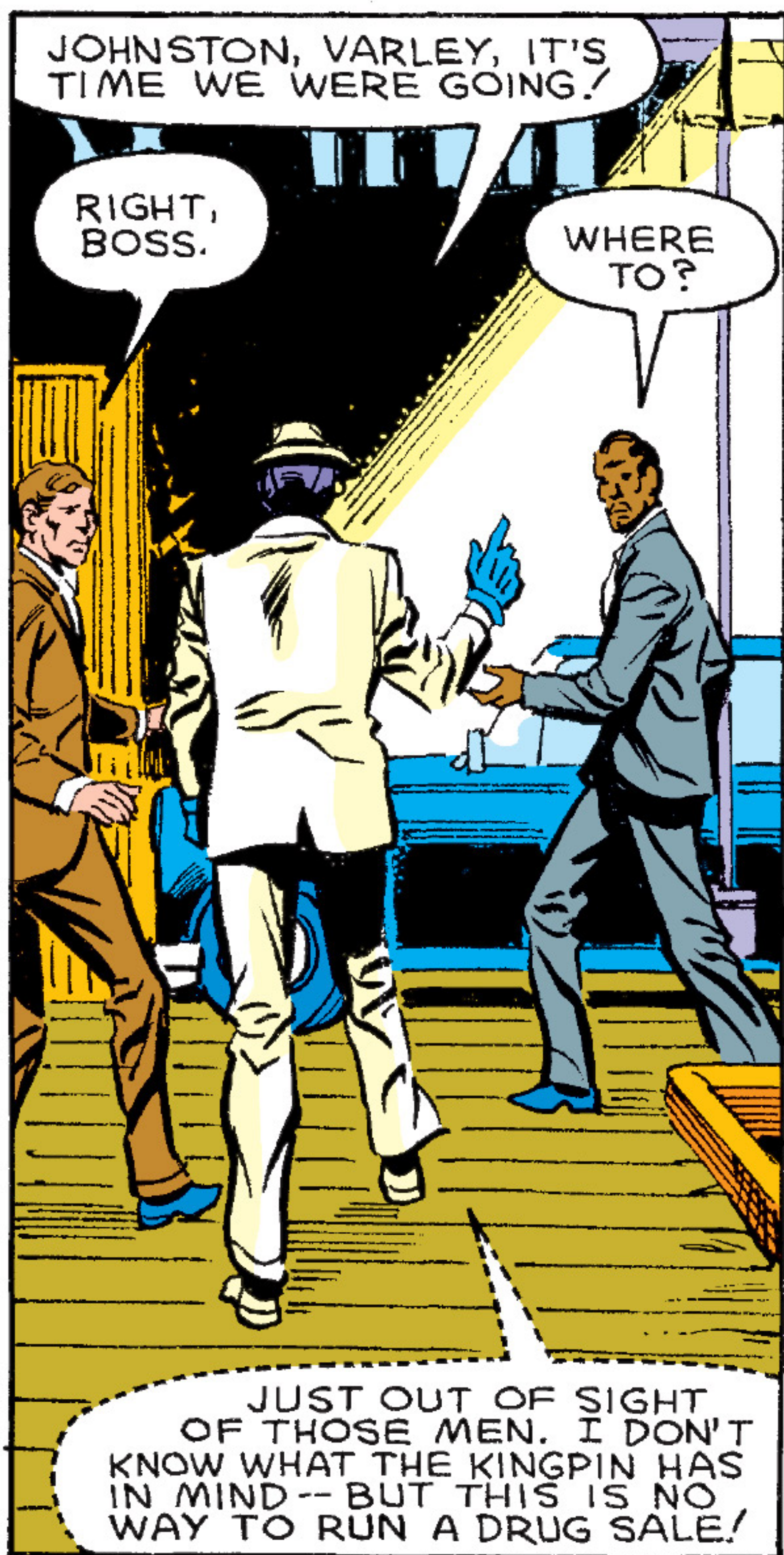
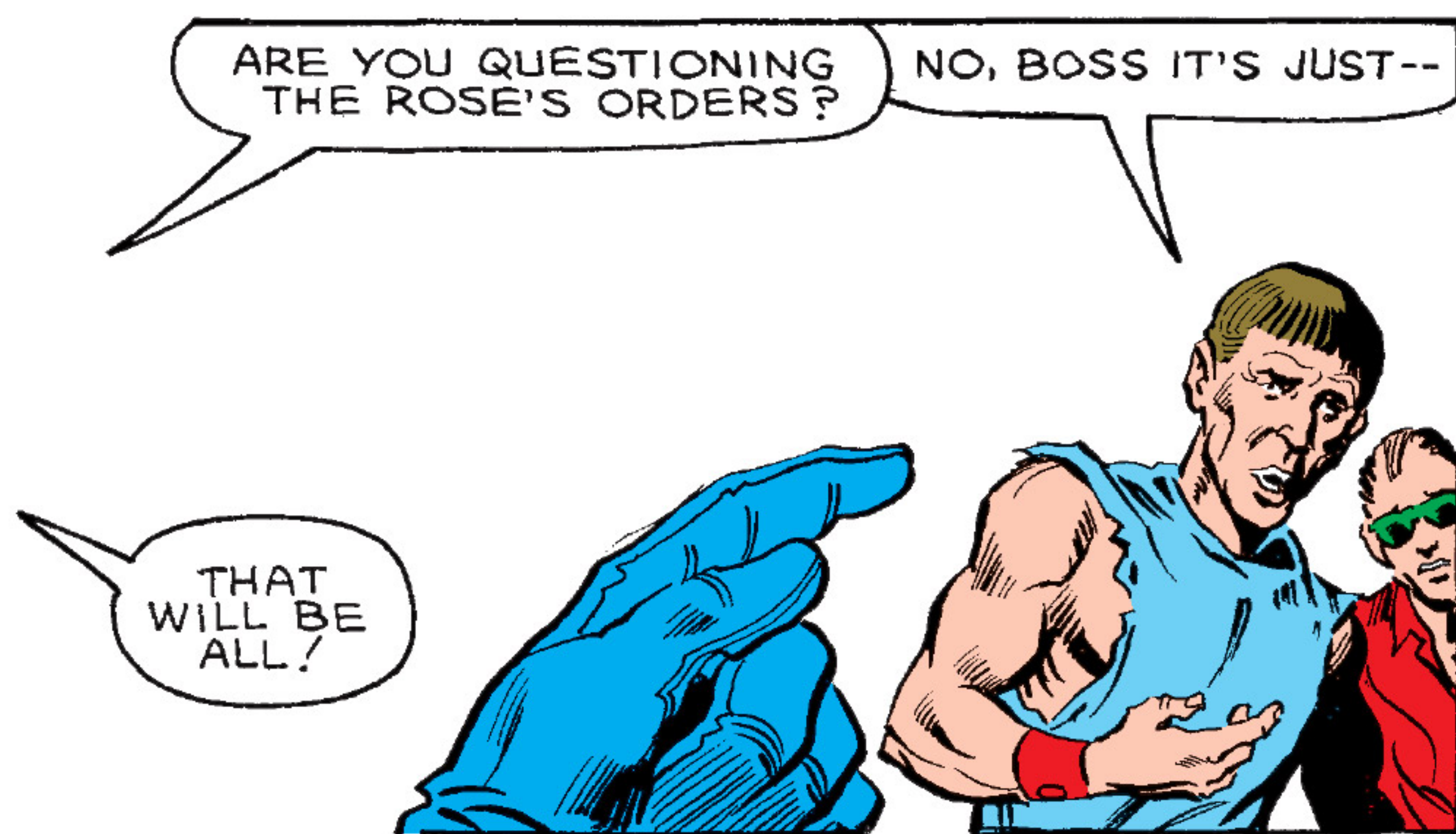
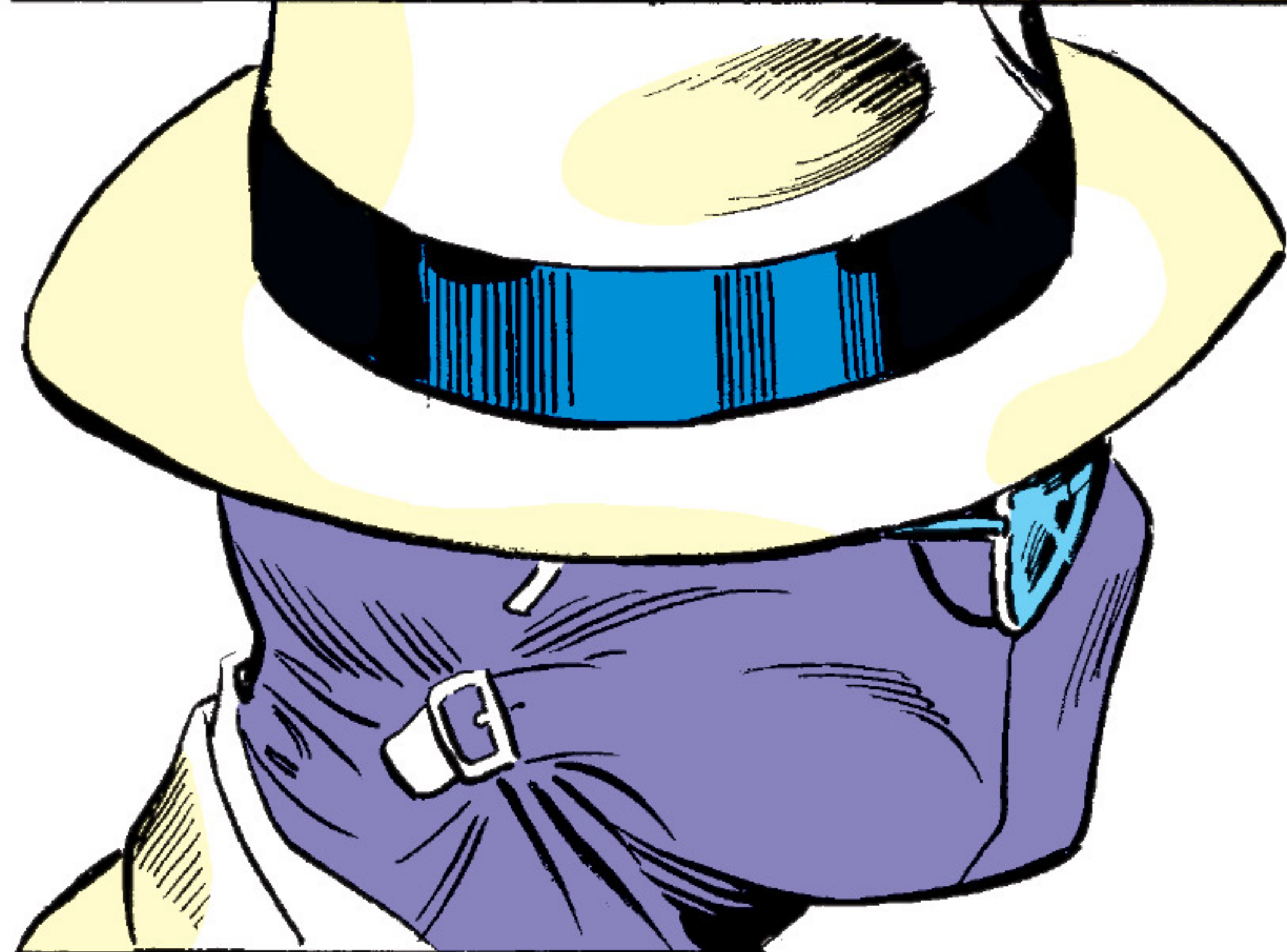
OKAY, NOT EVERYONE CAN BE MISERABLE.

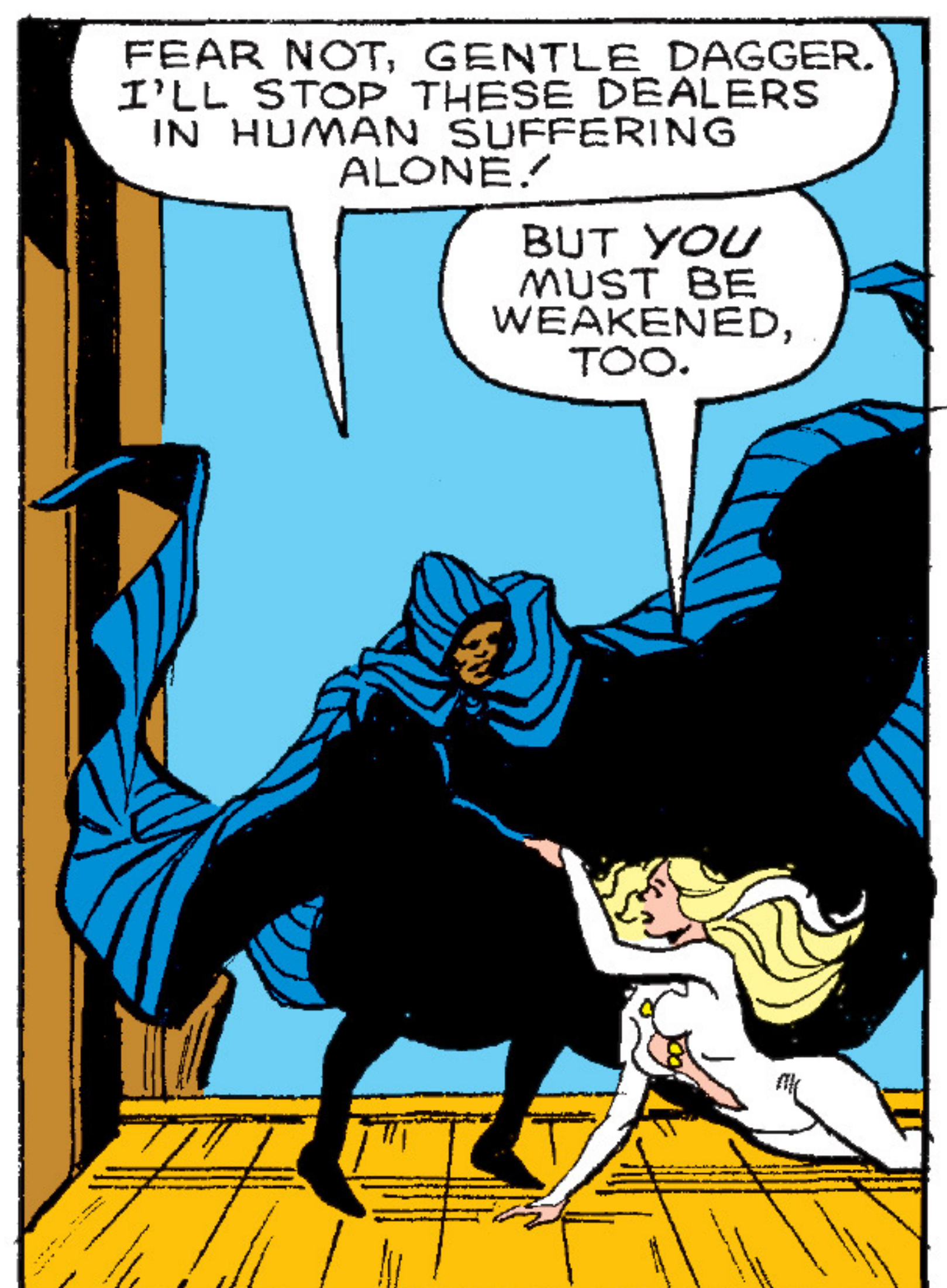
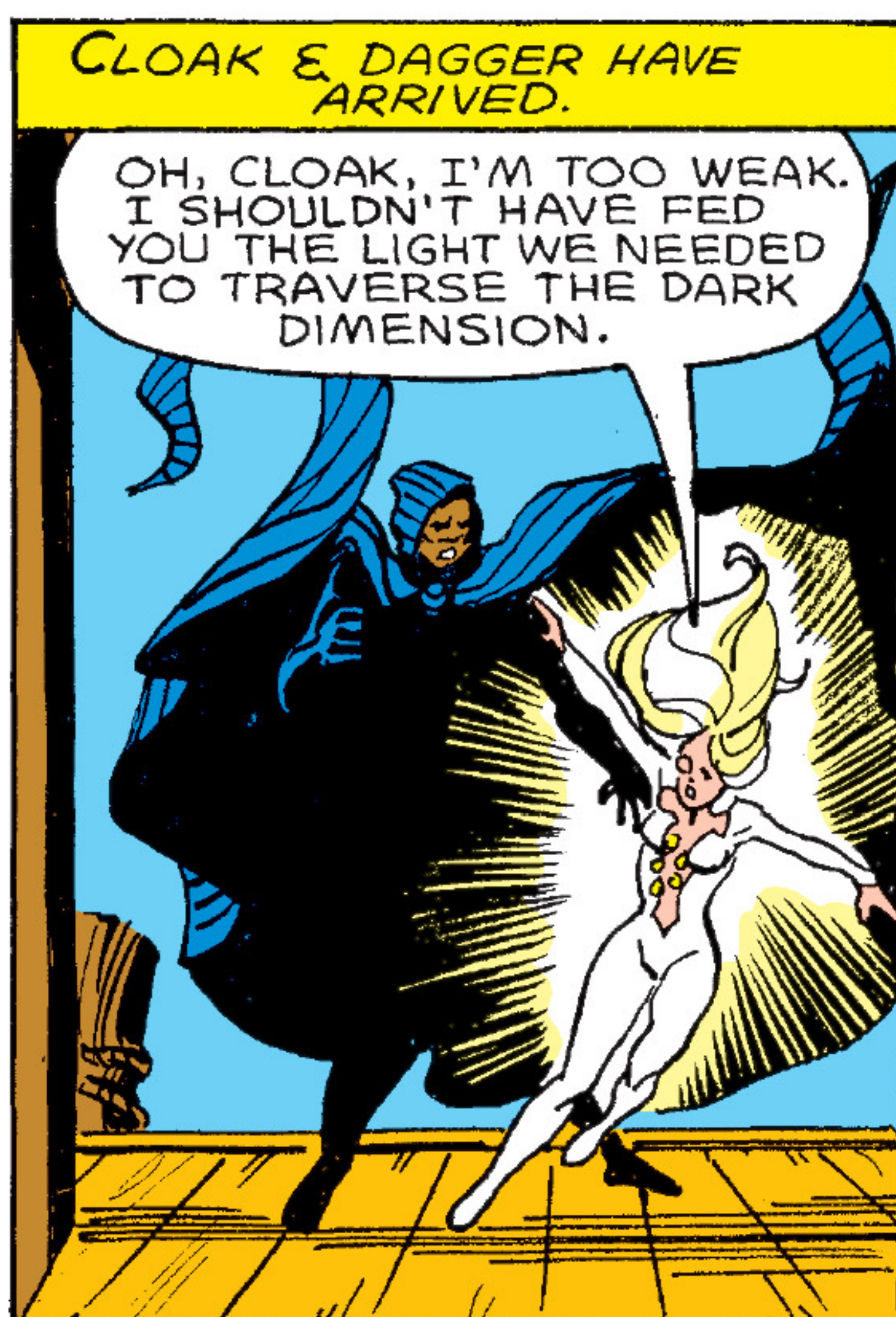
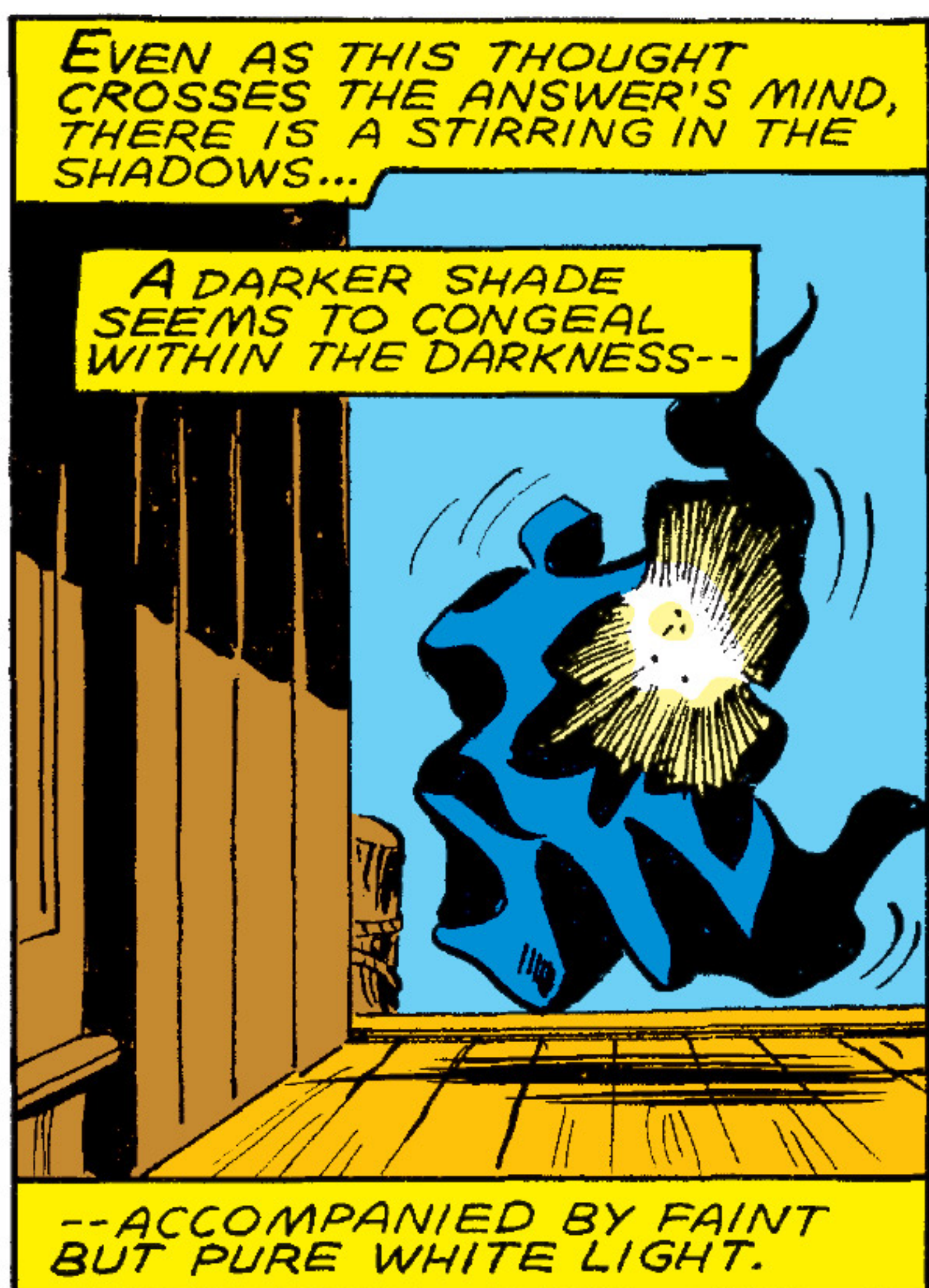
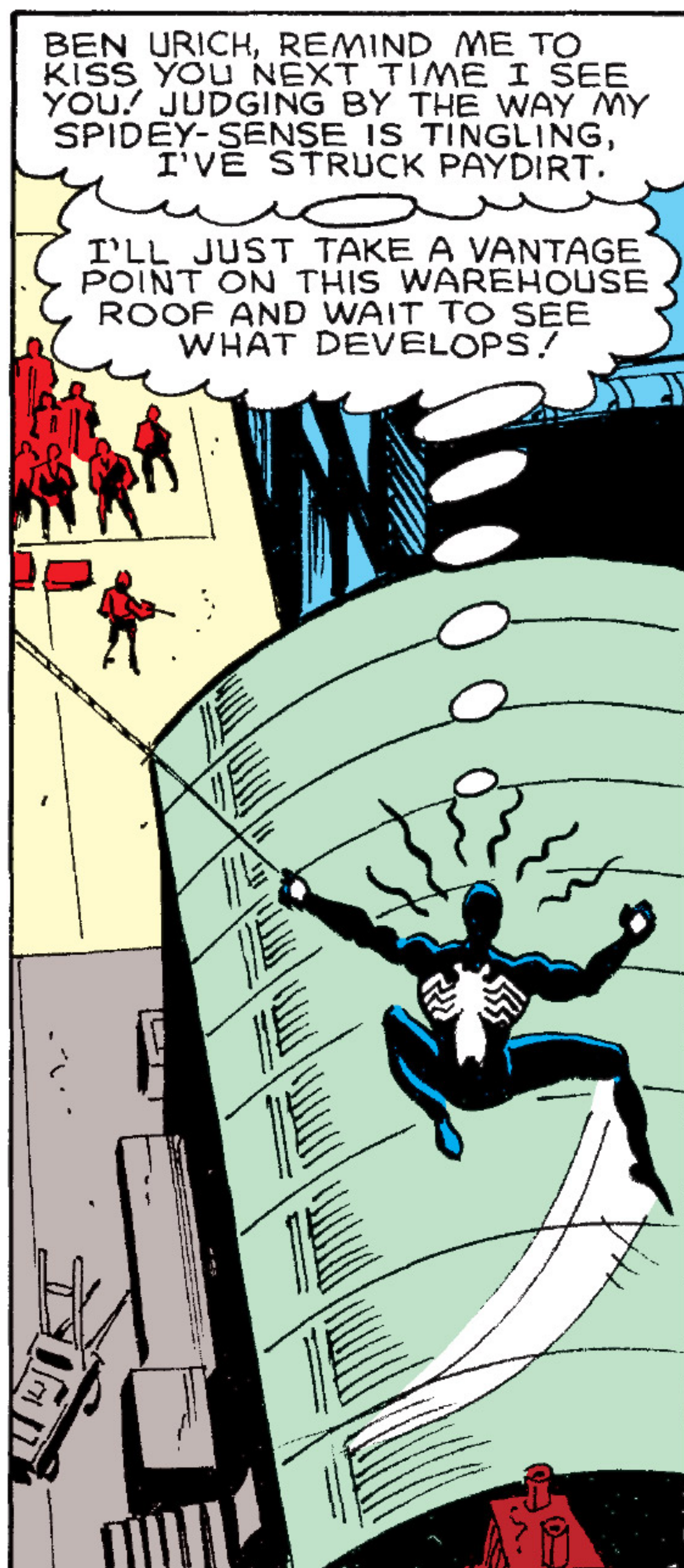
*FOR THE SECRET OF JONAH'S BIG DECISION, SEE THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL # 18, ON SALE THIS AUGUST--DANNY.

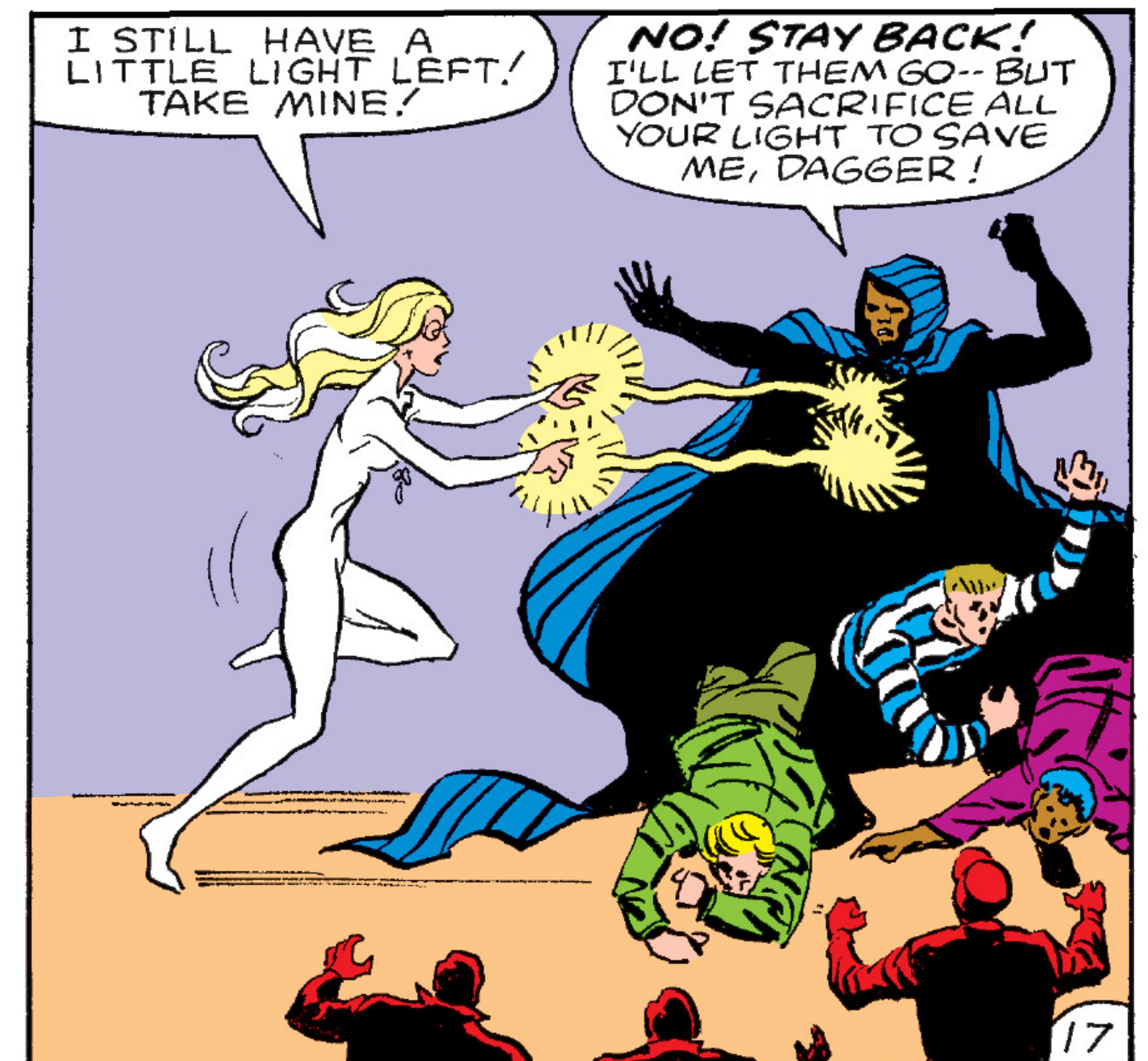
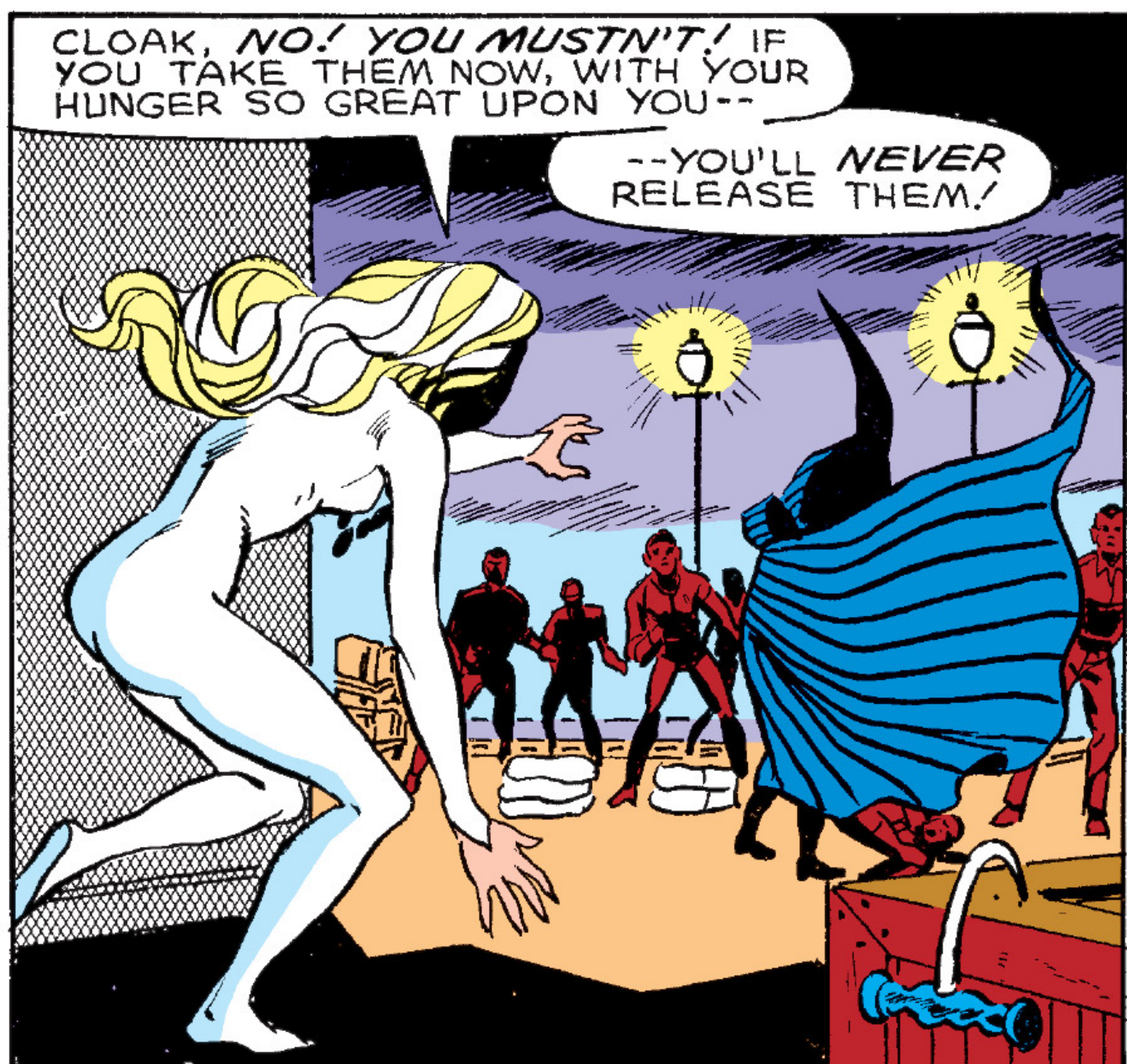


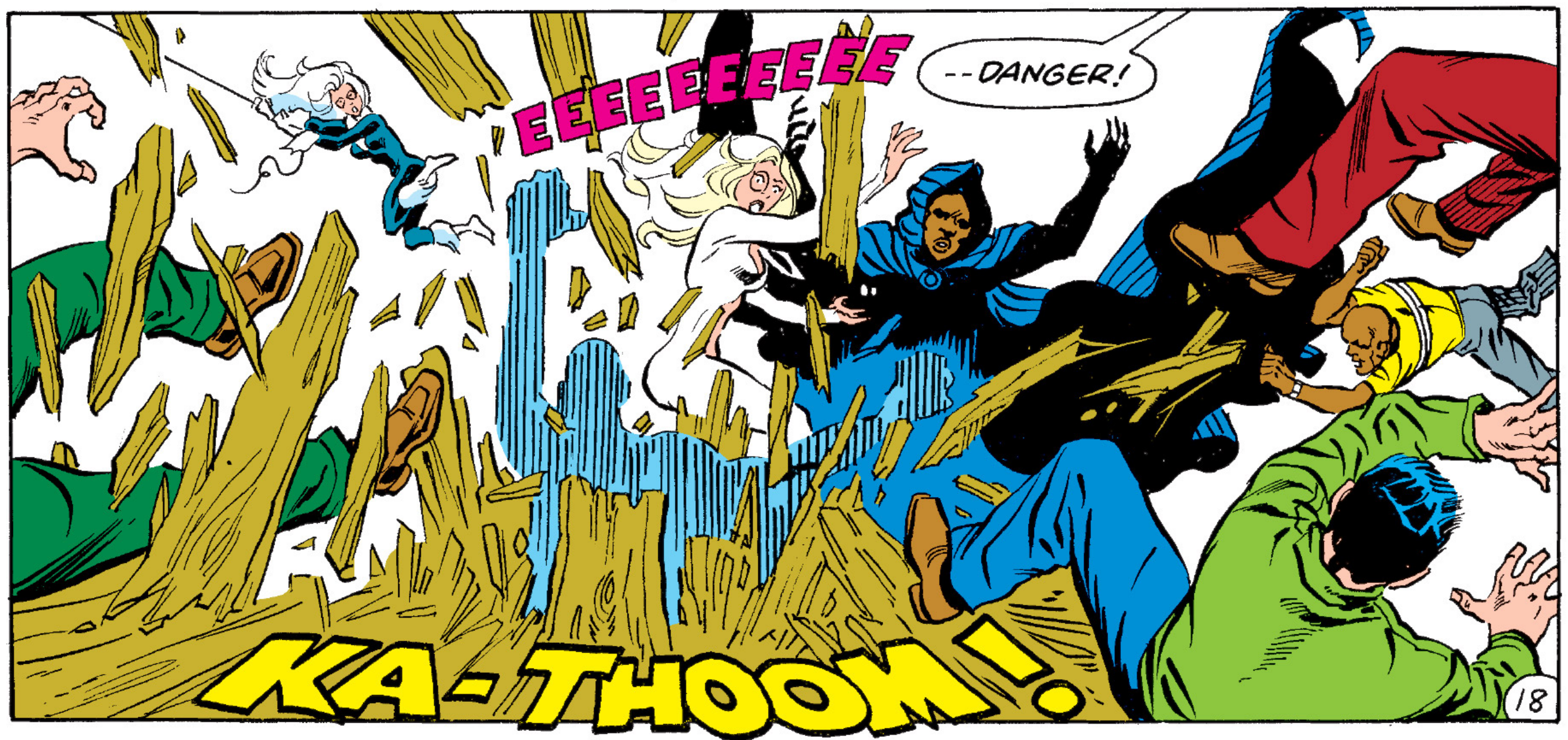
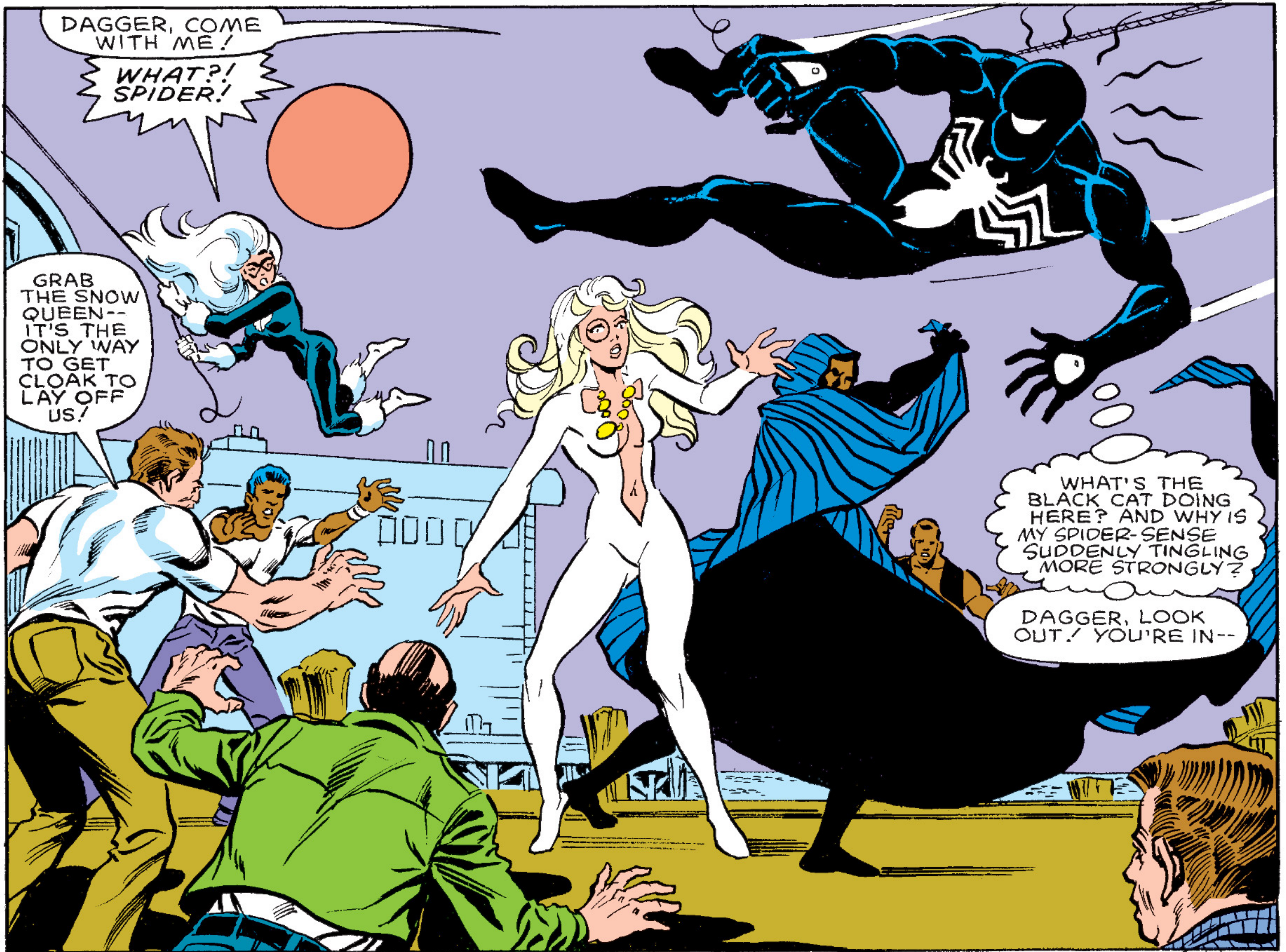
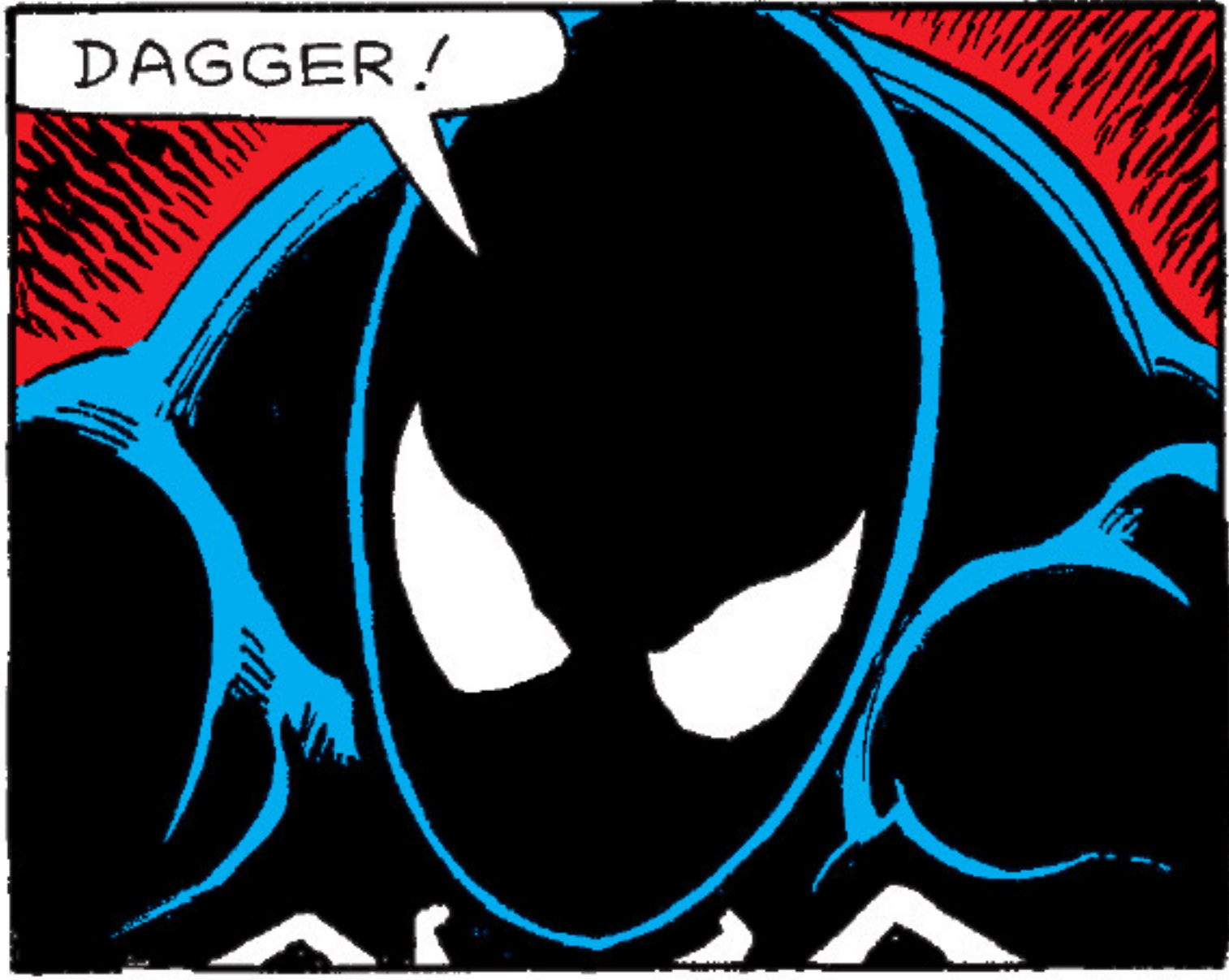
YEAH, ORDINARY FOLKS DON'T KNOW HOW EASY THEY HAVE IT!

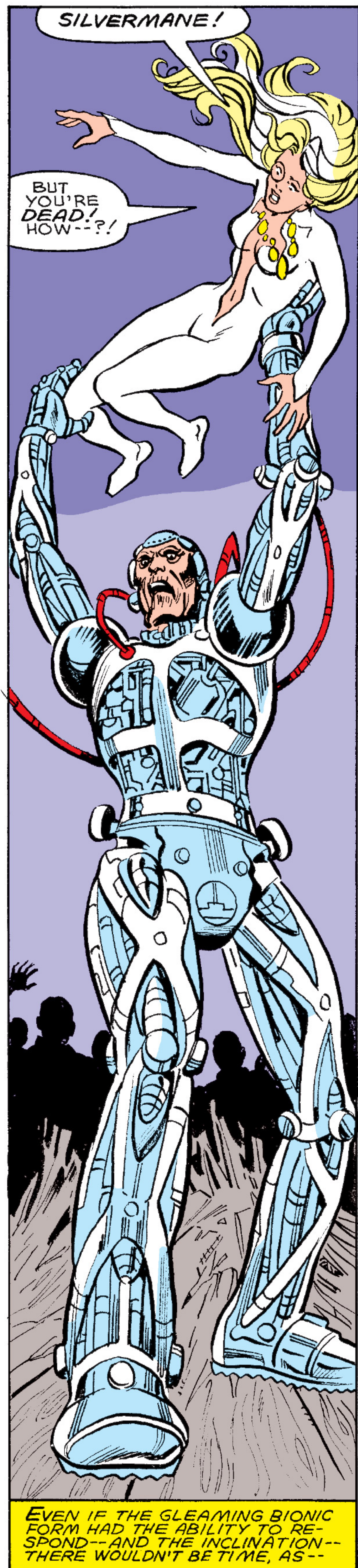












SILVERMANE!

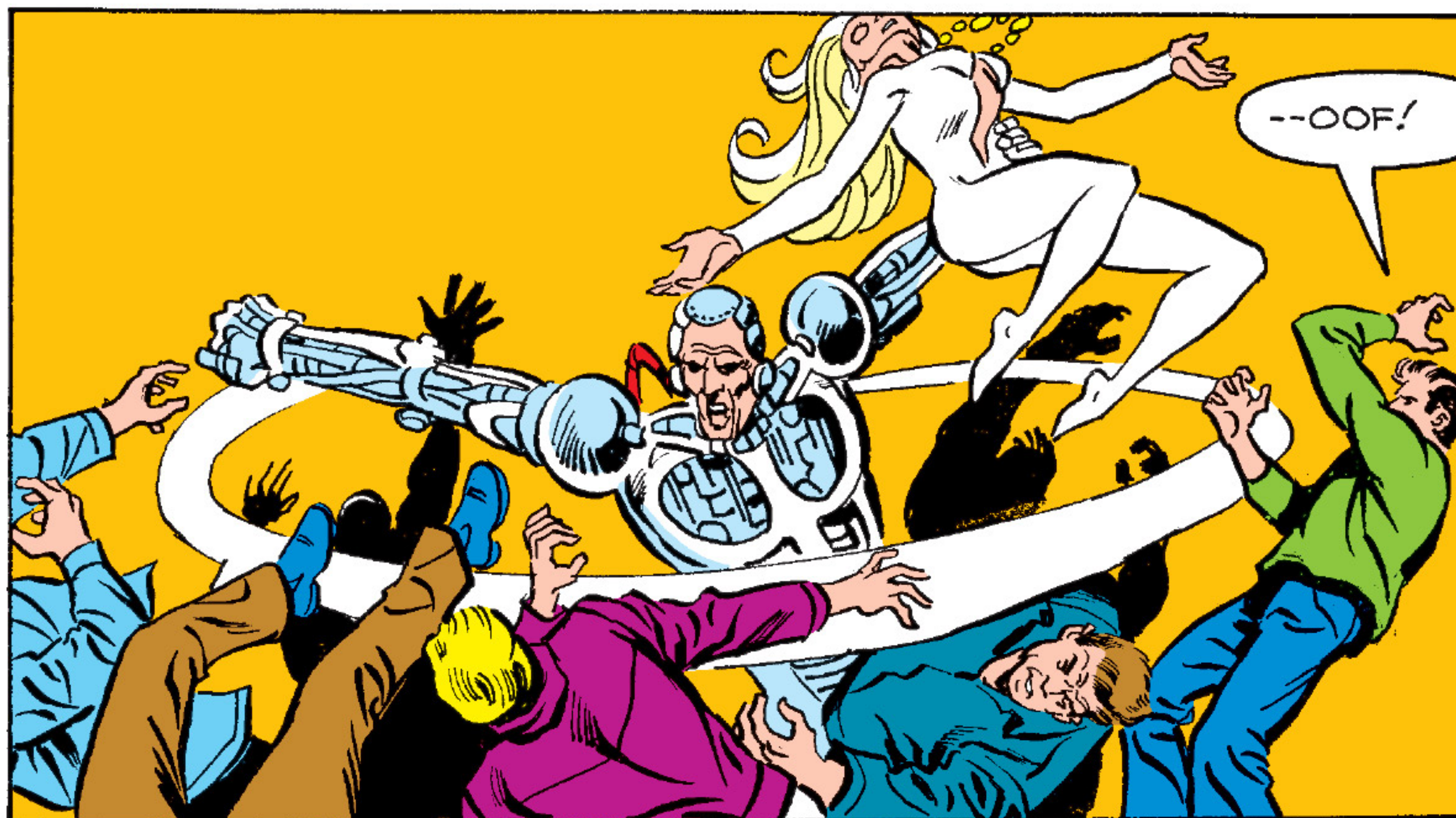
BUT YOU'RE DEAD! HOW--?!

EVEN IF THE GLEAMING BIONIC FORM HAD THE ABILITY TO RESPOND--AND THE INCLINATION--THERE WOULDN'T BE TIME, AS--

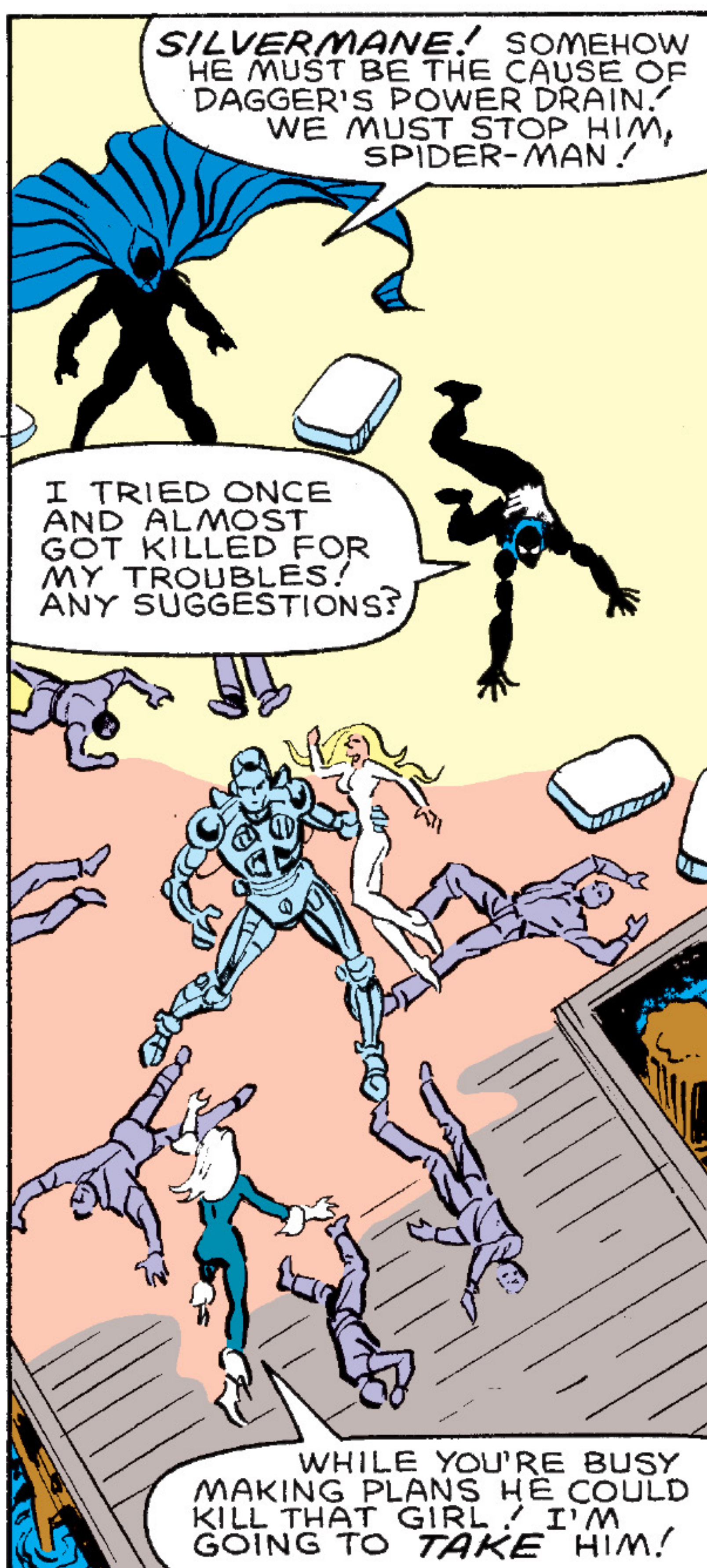


SILVERMANE?! HE MUST BE BACK IN THE RACKETS-- AND AFTER OUR DRUG SHIPMENT! STOP HIM!

CAREFUL, THOUGH HE LOOKS DANGER--



--OOF!



SILVERMANE! SOMEHOW HE MUST BE THE CAUSE OF DAGGER'S POWER DRAIN. WE MUST STOP HIM, SPIDER-MAN!

I TRIED ONCE AND ALMOST GOT KILLED FOR MY TROUBLES! ANY SUGGESTIONS?

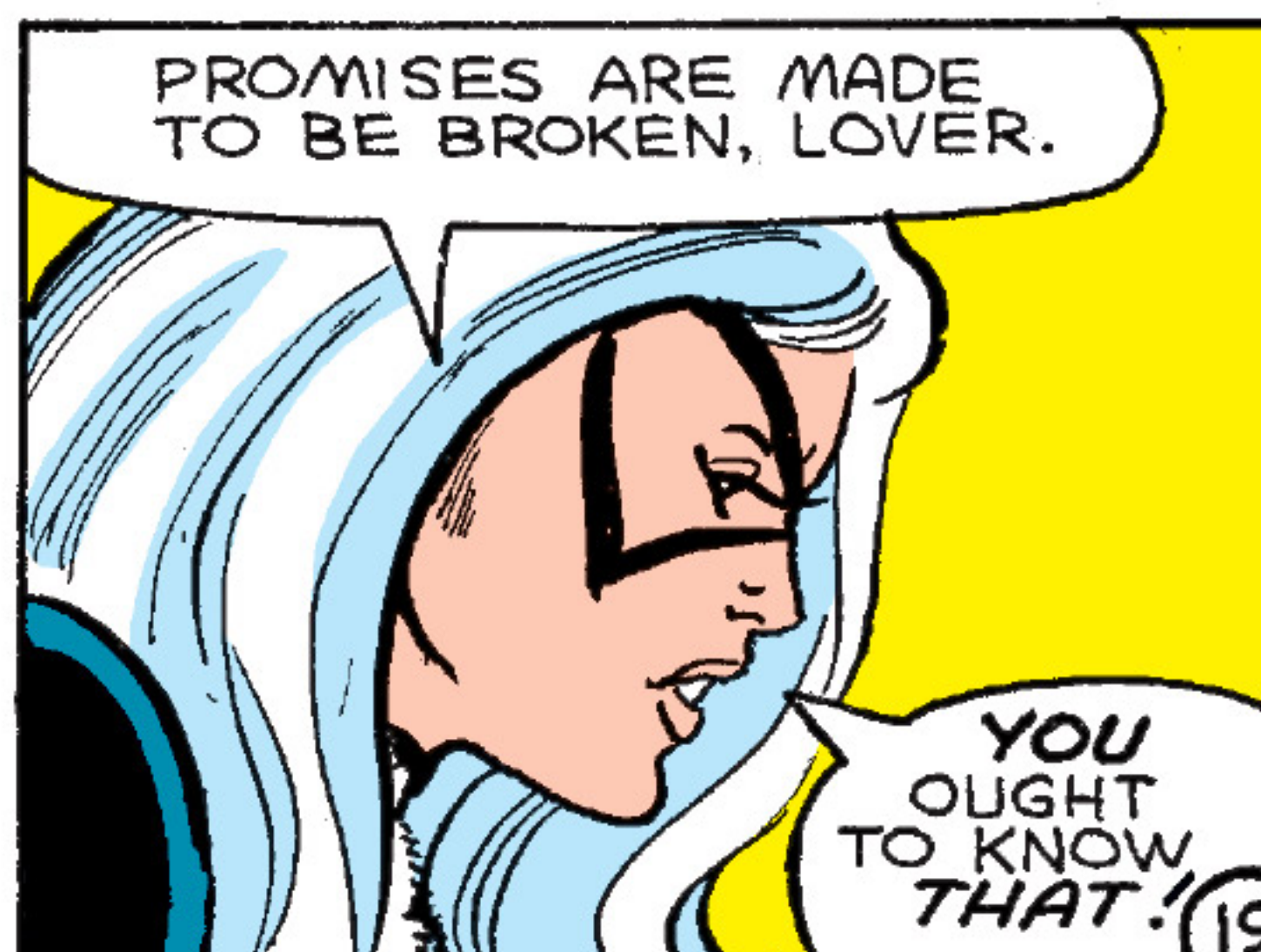
WHILE YOU'RE BUSY MAKING PLANS HE COULD KILL THAT GIRL! I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM!



CAREFUL! DAGGER MUST NOT BE HARMED!

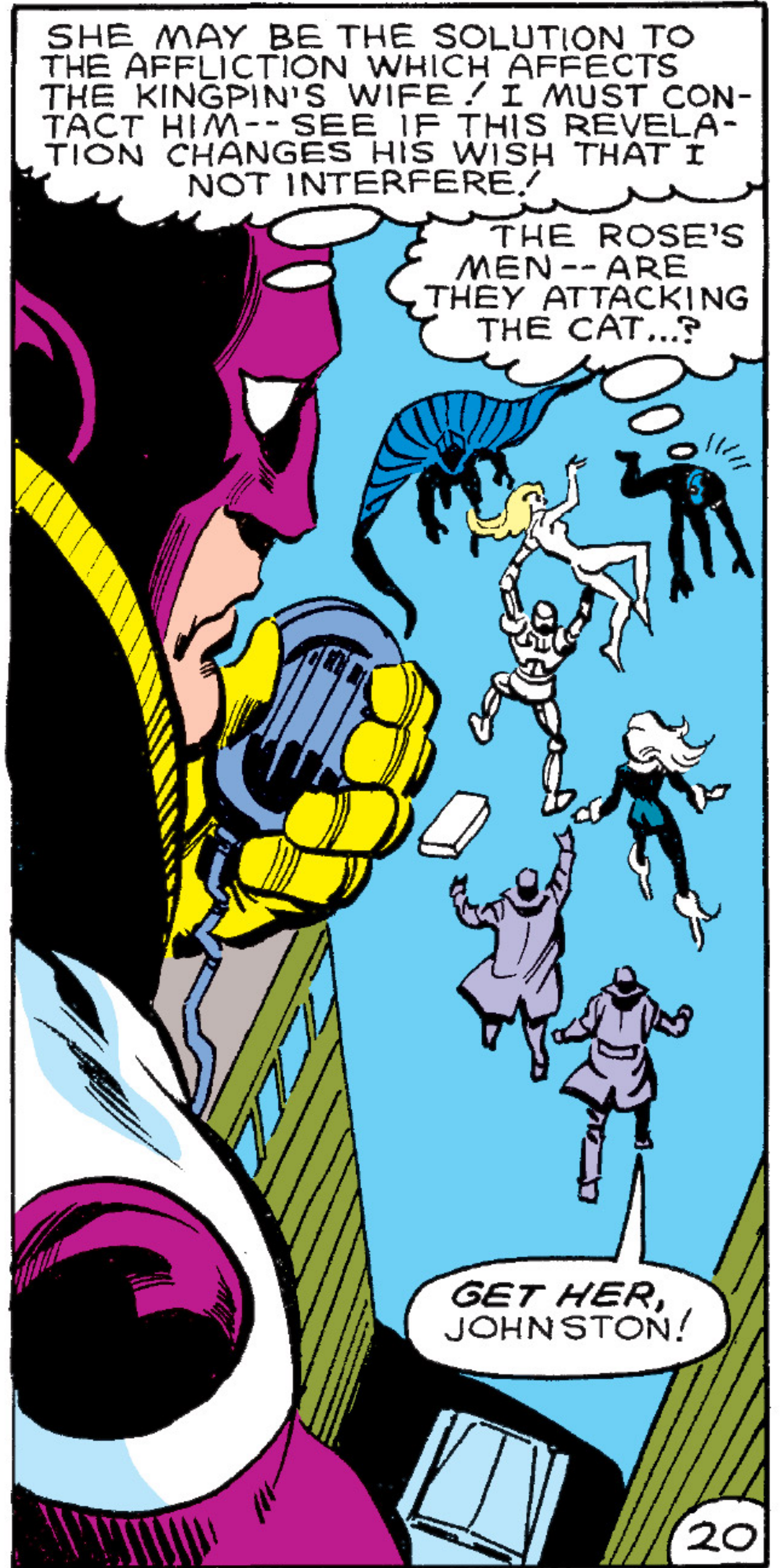
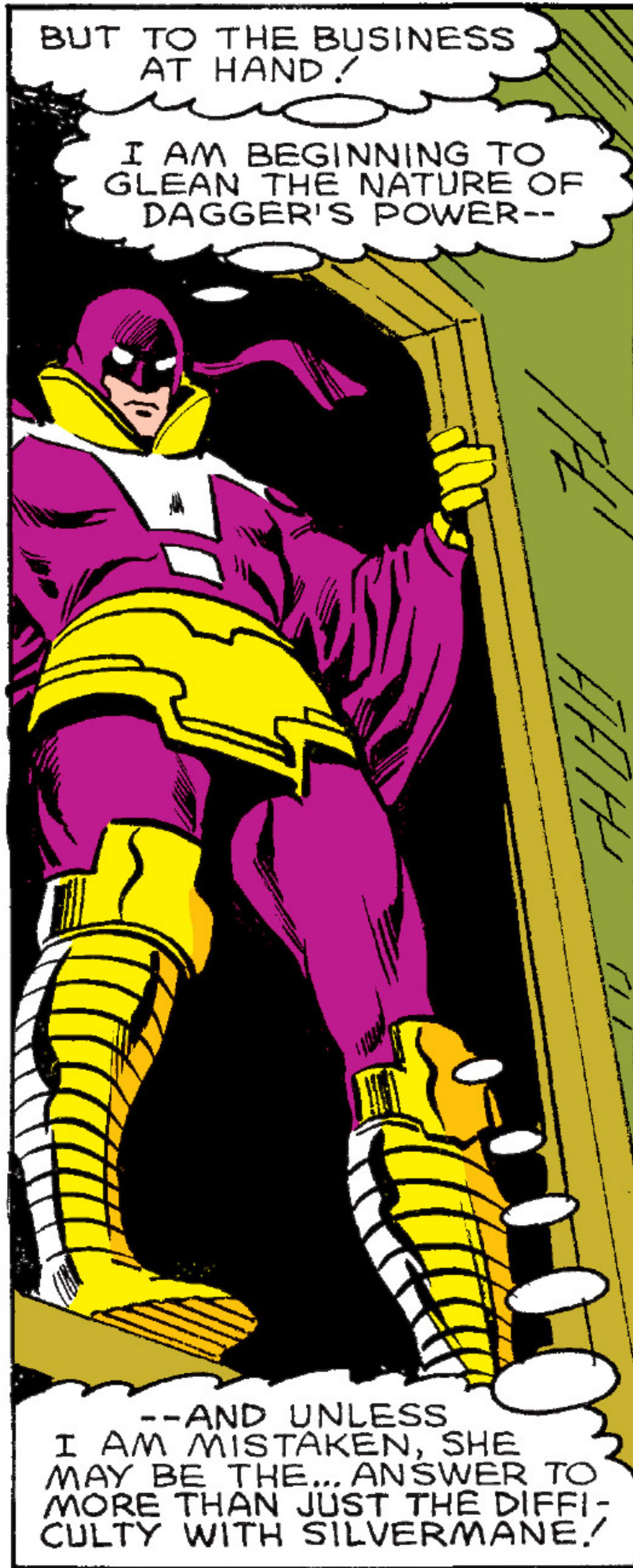
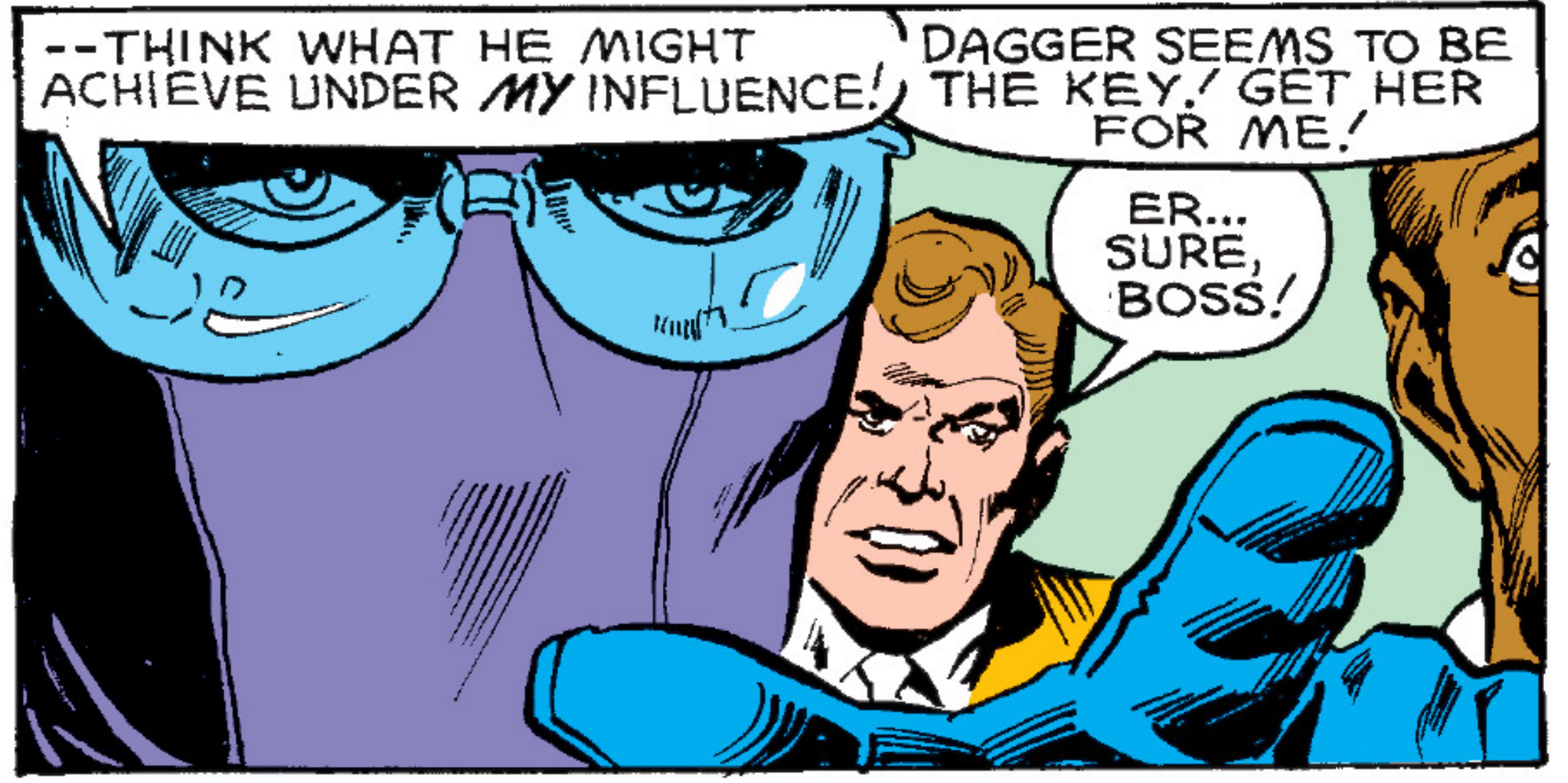
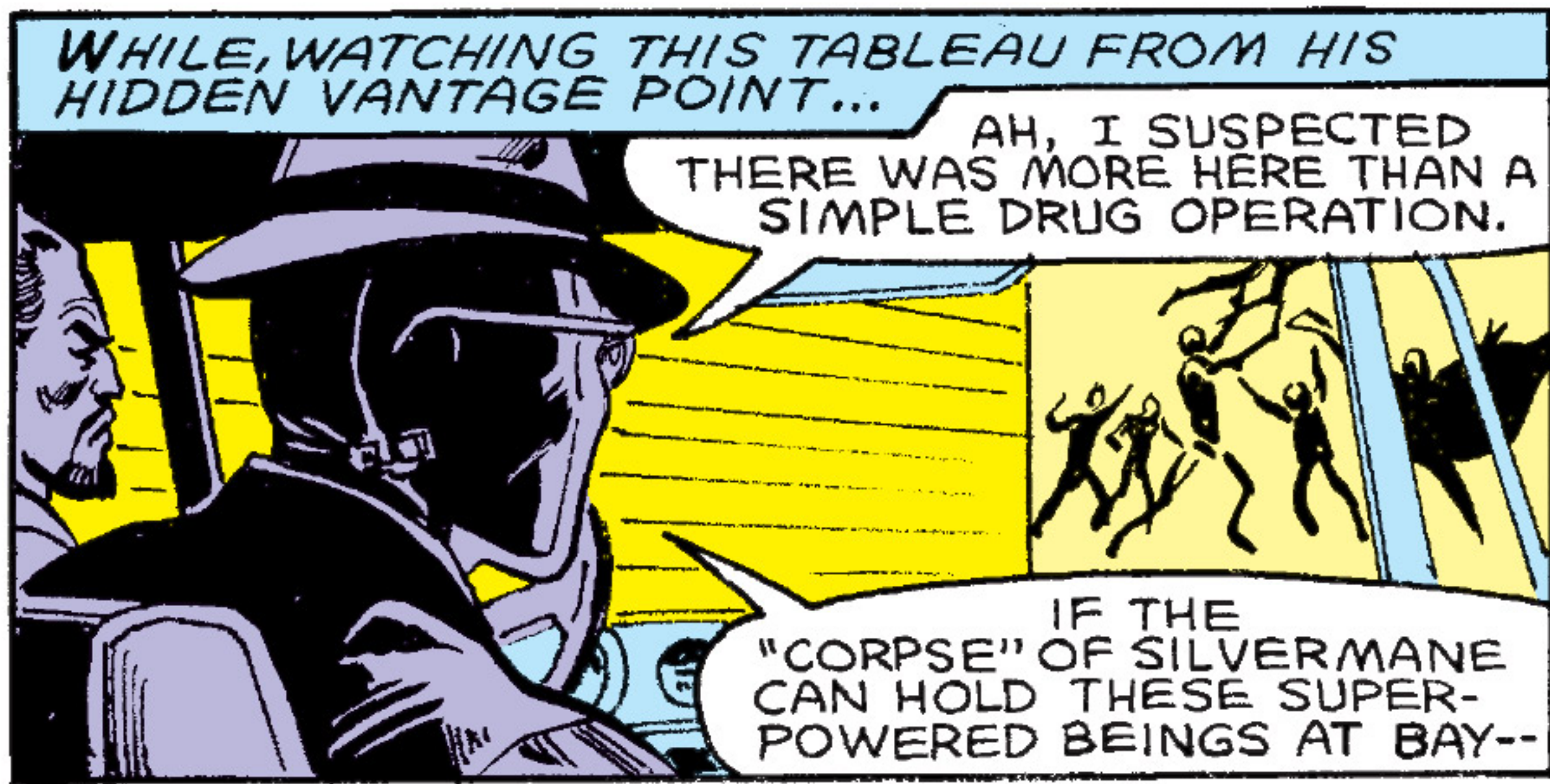
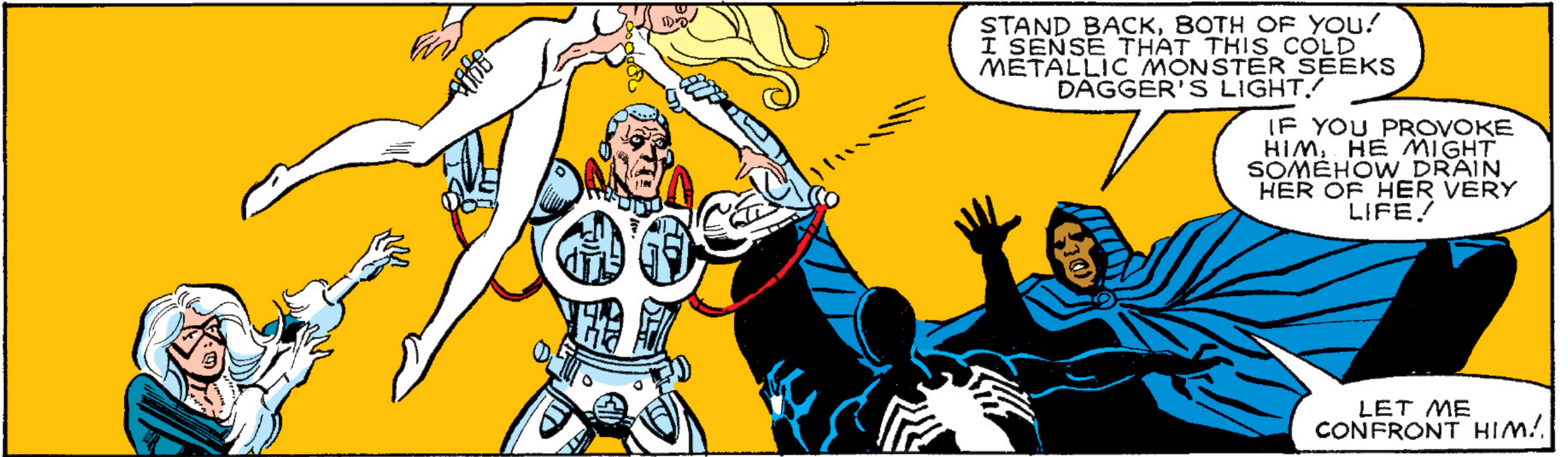


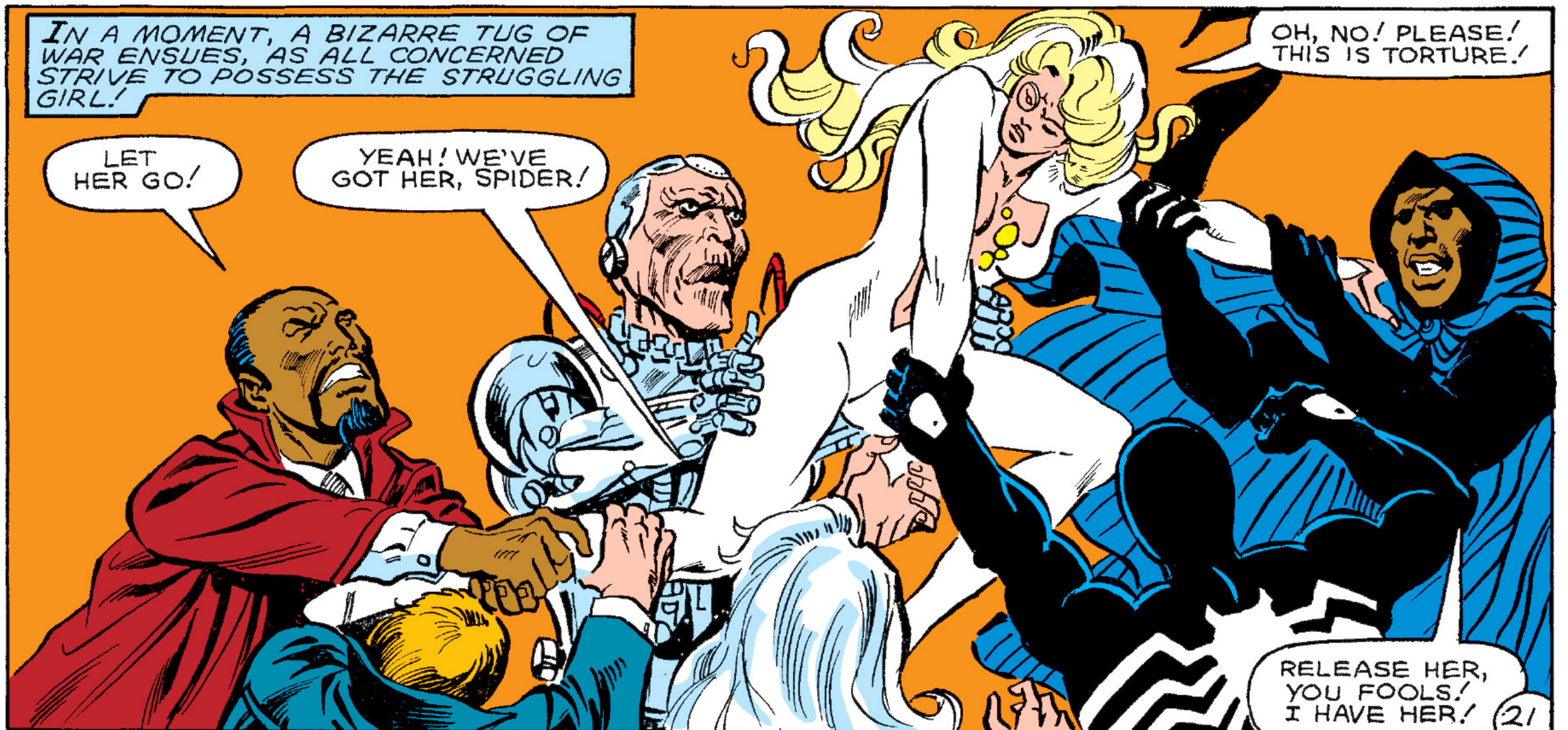
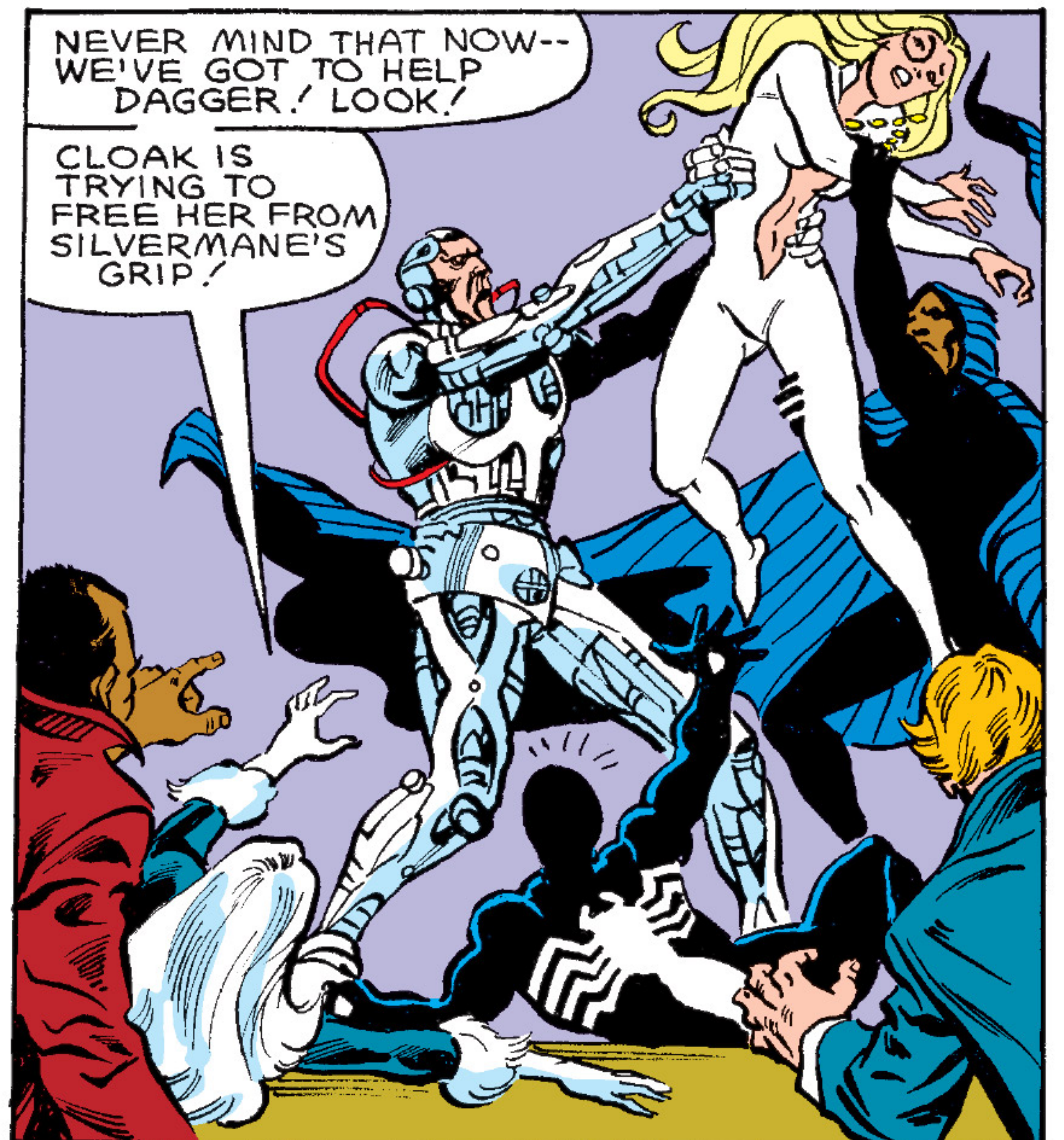
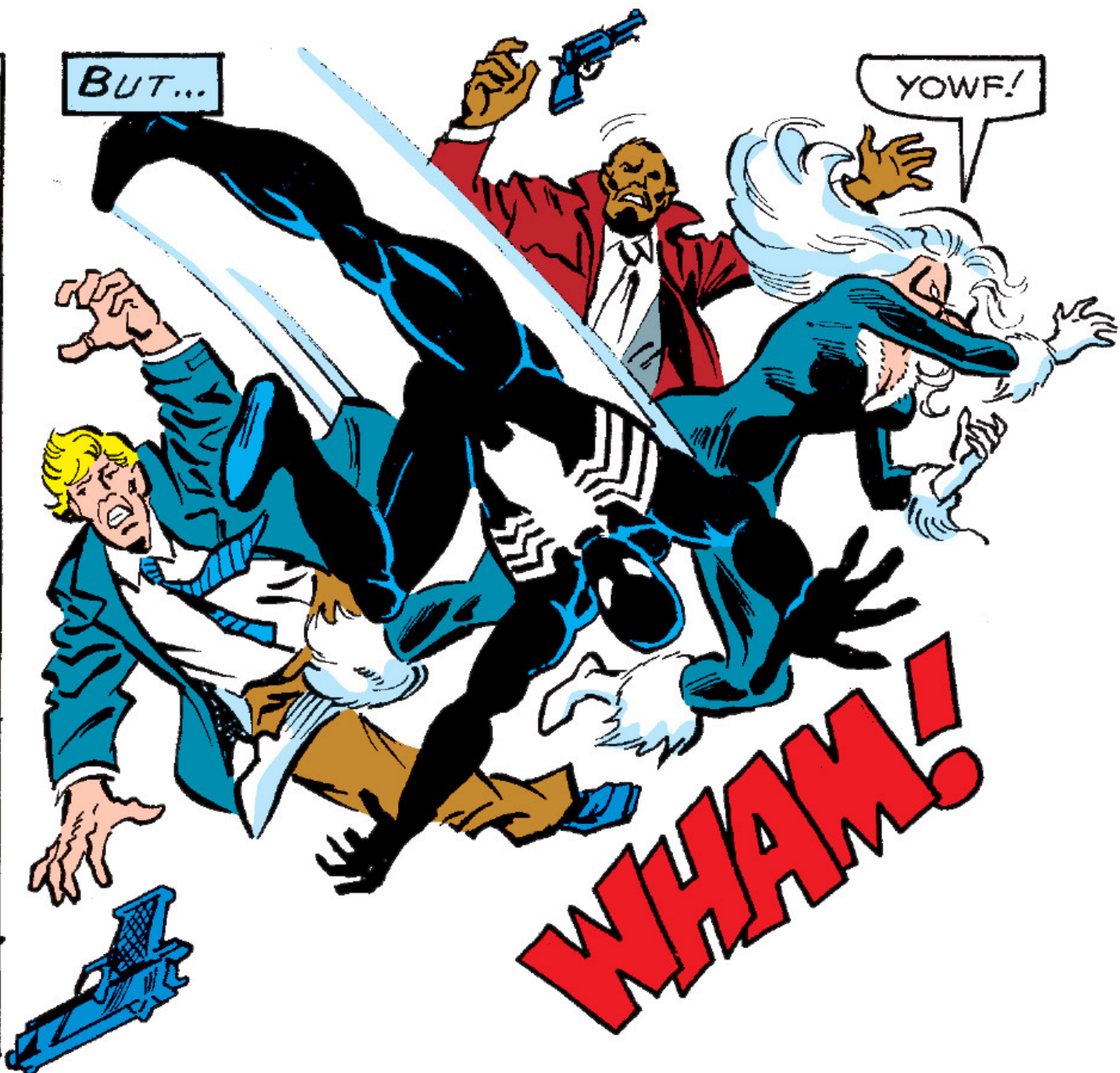
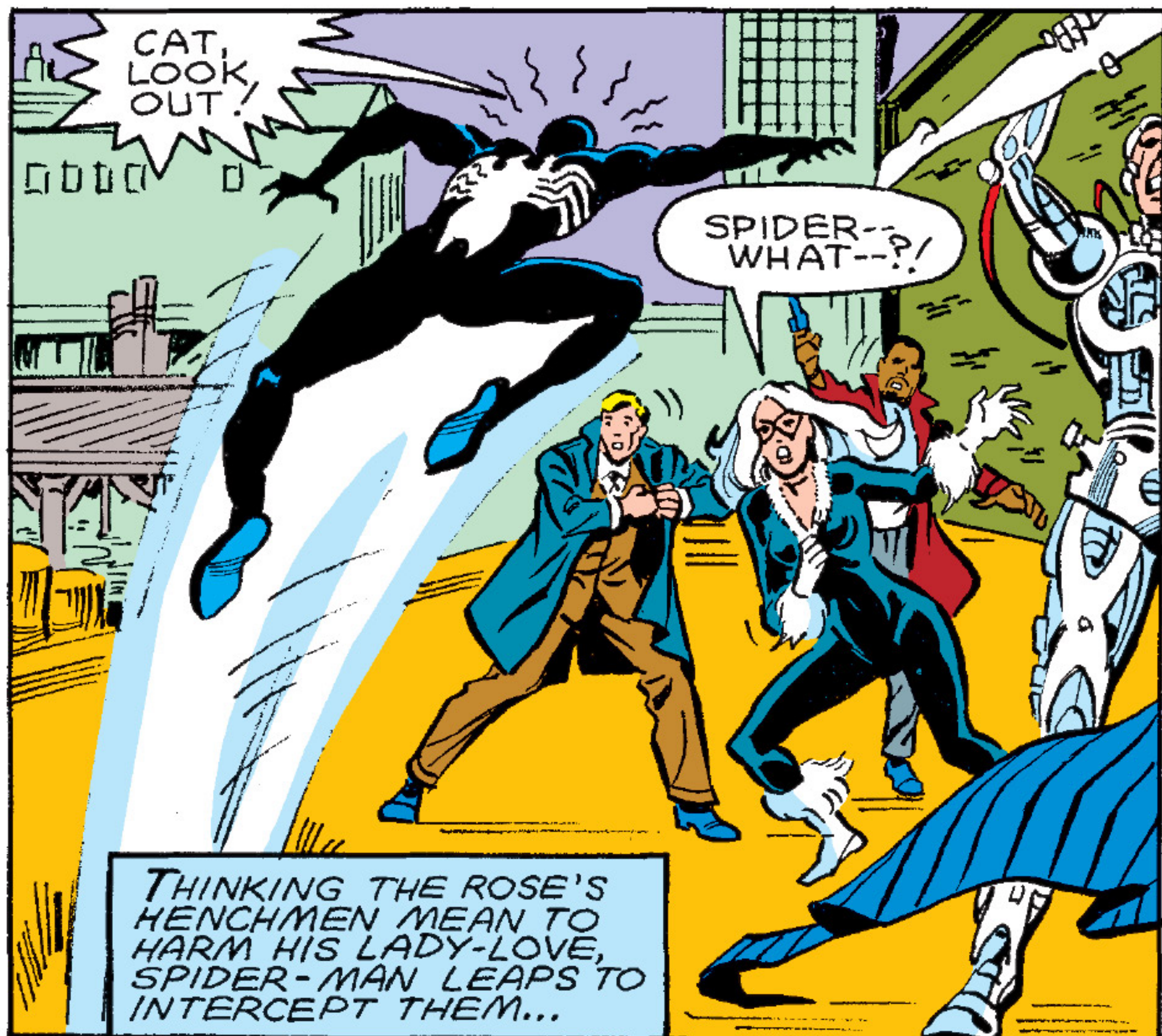
CAT, NO! YOU PROMISED YOU WOULDN'T TACKLE HIM ALONE!

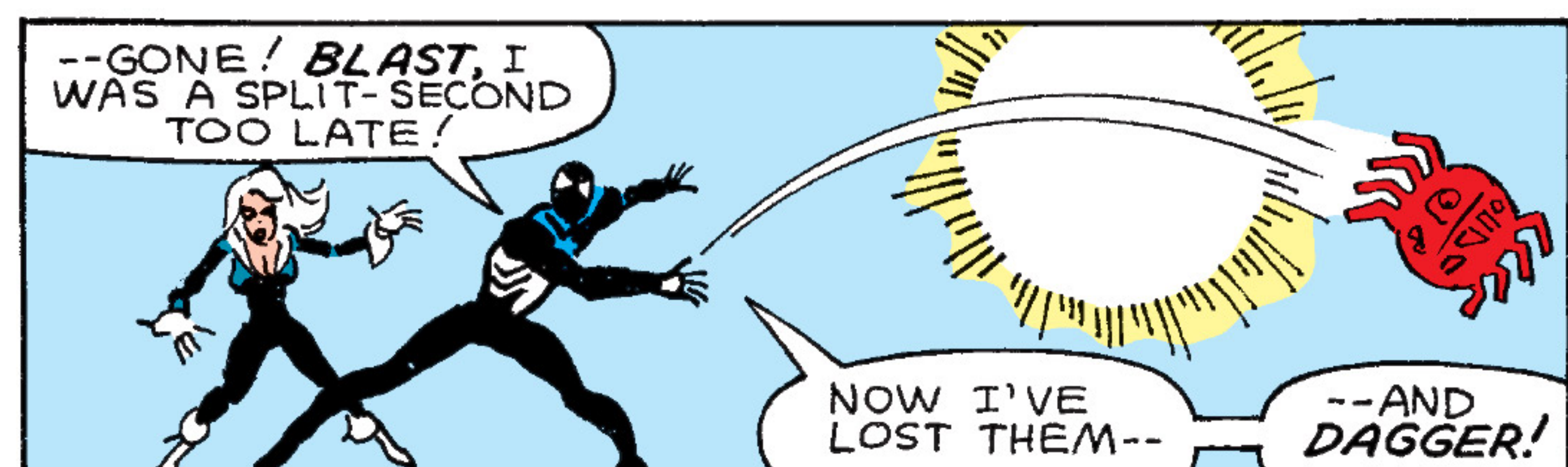
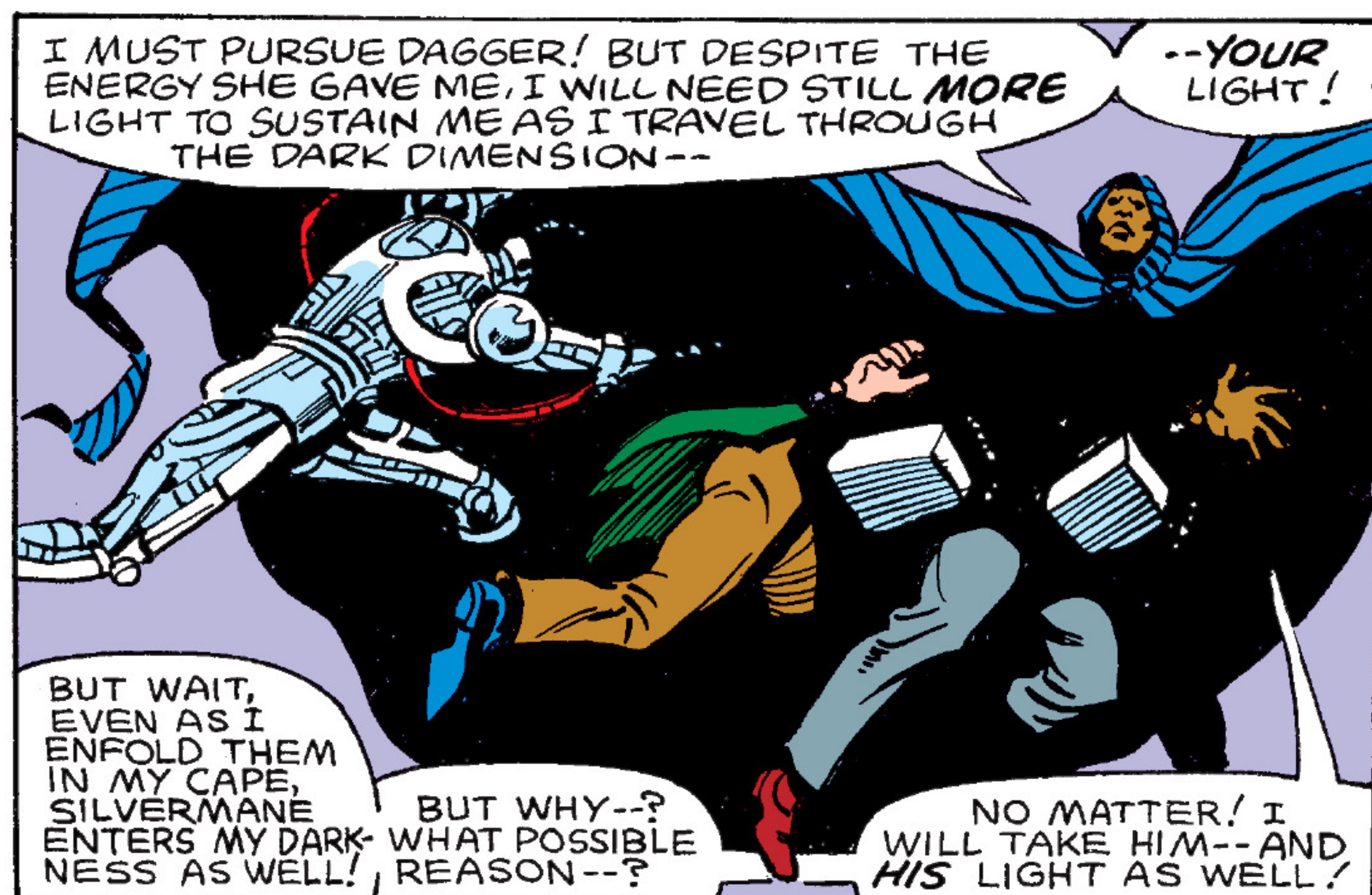
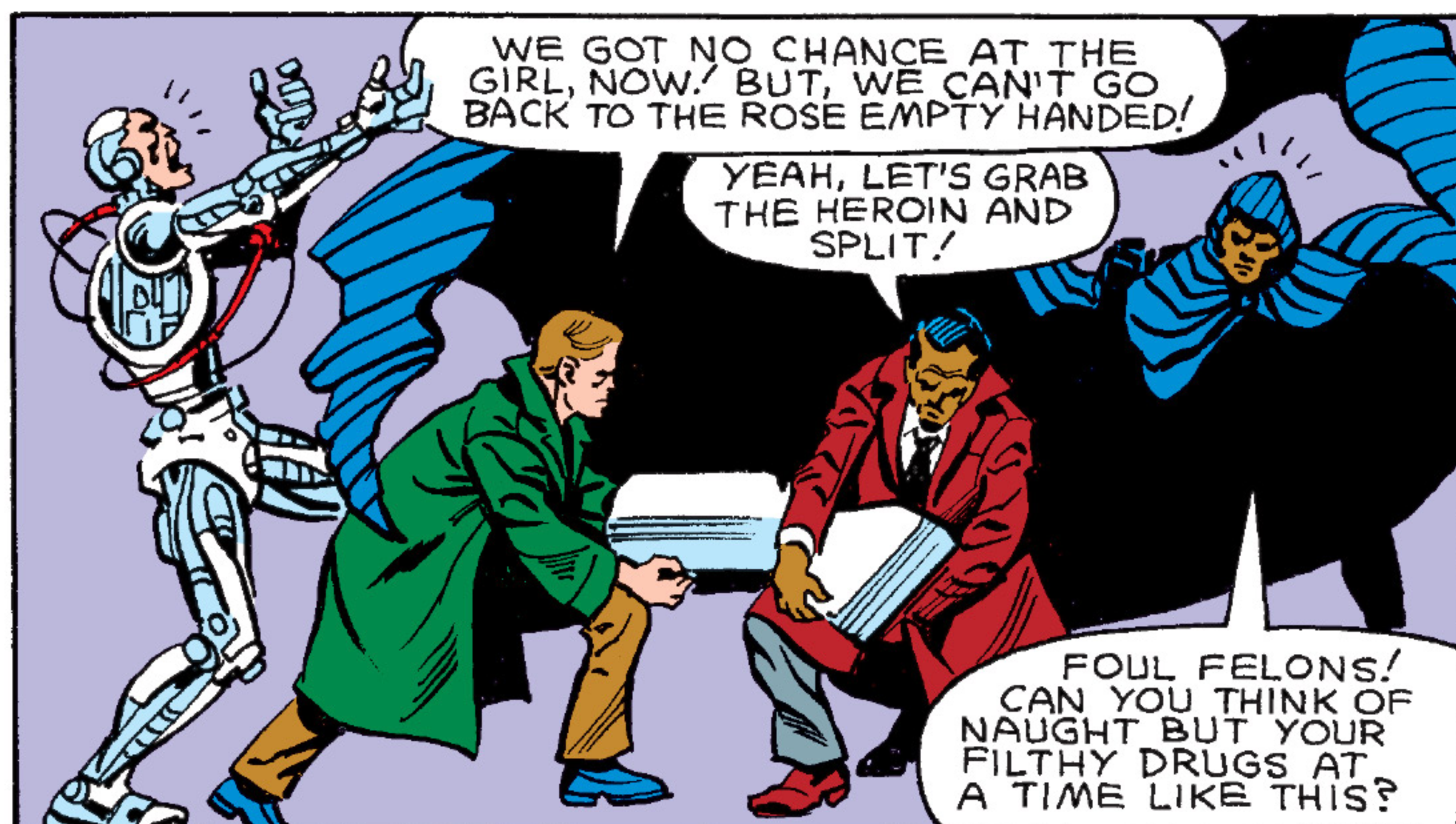
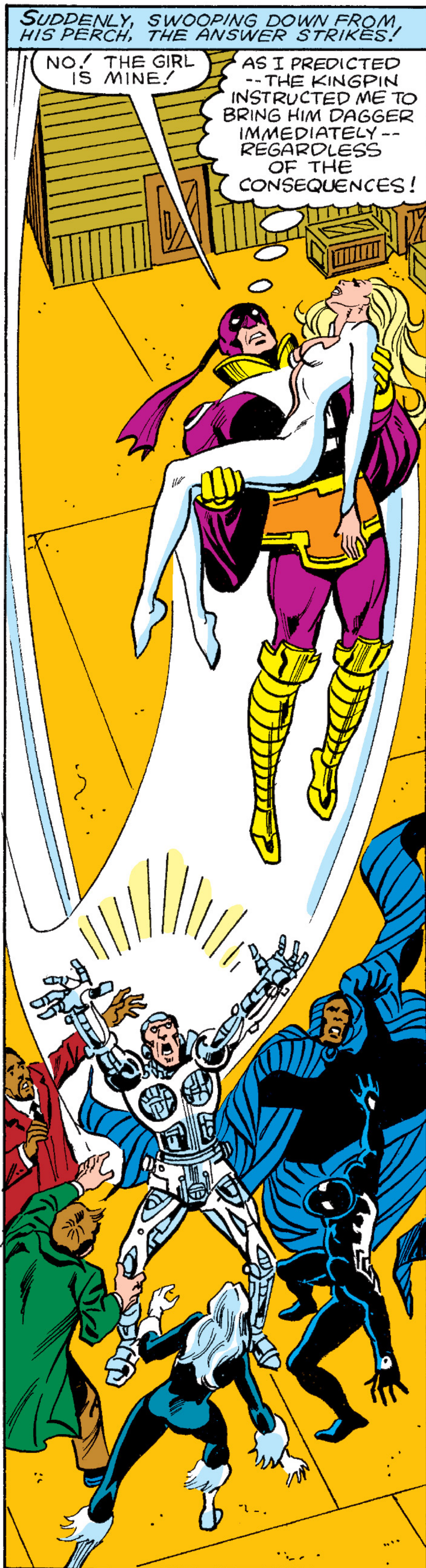


PROMISES ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN, LOVER.

YOU OUGHT TO KNOW THAT!







NEXT: **THE FINAL ANSWER!**